

Mikaela's first interview

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2 **Interviewer:** What do you believe about God?

3 **Mikaela:** God's the creator of the universe. He gave his only son to us.
4 He's basically the top guy. ... he's the top guy.

5 **Interviewer:** Mmm ... So there's no one above God?

6 **Mikaela:** No one above him.

7 **Interviewer:** Okay. Have you always thought about God in this way?

8 **Mikaela:** No. When I was tiny as anything ... When you're little you can
9 think "Oh, God, ah, that's like the only person you learn about
10 before Jesus" and then like when you're little, you jus' think
11 "Yes, he created the earth, he made me." And when you get
12 older you tend to think a little bit more deeper about God "What
13 has he given me? What am I gonna give him?"

14 **Interviewer:** Okay, so it's like a relationship?

15 **Mikaela:** Yeah, like a relationship.

16 **Interviewer:** So, when you were younger did you think of God in terms of
17 relationship?

18 **Mikaela:** Mm, I thought of God more like a parent.

19 **Interviewer:** Okay.

20 **Mikaela:** Like if I didn't do something right he'd punish me for it.

21 **Interviewer:** Okay, so today do you see God that way? Like in this stage in
22 your life, is God still someone who punishes you when you do
23 something wrong?

24 **Mikaela:** No, because he's a very – when you're very little, y'think "Yeah,
25 I've done something wrong. He's never gonna forgive me for
26 this." But I know that if I ask for forgiveness then he'll probably –
27 he'll give it to me if I am truly repentful for what I've done.

28 **Interviewer:** And is there a word you could use to describe your relationship
29 with God?

30 **Mikaela:** Yeah. Ah, complex.

31 **Interviewer:** Complex?

32 **Mikaela:** Complex.

33 **Interviewer:** Good. Did you think of that word now? Or is that a word that
34 has been sitting there with you?

35 **Mikaela:** Um – yeah, it's been sitting there with me for ages. It was
36 "complicated," now it's "complex". Two different – "complicated"
37 means, um, yeah, I didn't get along with him very well.
38 "Complex" means it's very deep and they –

39 **Interviewer:** Okay.

- 40 **Mikaela:** So it's hard to explain.
- 41 **Interviewer:** Yes. Okay. And do you know when you started to change from
42 thinking about it being complicated to being complex?
- 43 **Mikaela:** In the last ... 4 or 5 months.
- 44 **Interviewer:** Has that got anything to do with your decision to prepare to
45 become a Catholic?
- 46 **Mikaela:** Um, most of it, but not all of it.
- 47 **Interviewer:** So, are there any other ways in which your faith has changed
48 from when you were little to – to now?
- 49 **Mikaela:** Um, when I was little I was forced to go to Church. Now I go to
50 Church on my own accord. And I'm – out of my family – out of
51 me and my sister and my Dad and my Mum, me and my sister
52 are the only two who actually do go to Church – and we've
53 actually got really good friends who take us to our churches. Me
54 and my sister go to different Church – I go to Catholic; she goes
55 to born-again, Lutheran-based religion Church. And that –
56 we've just chosen two different paths, but they're basically the
57 same.
- 58 **Interviewer:** Mm-mm.
- 59 **Mikaela:** That my parents don't go to Church.
- 60 **Interviewer:** Now, what about Jesus? Is Jesus different from God for you?
- 61 **Mikaela:** Jesus, he's our saviour. God, he's – he's – well, he's heavenly
62 Father. Jesus came to this earth. He changed a lot of people.
63 He brought religion, the Catholic Christian religion to the earth.
64 He was – yeah – he gave his only – he gave his life up for
65 everybody else, which not many people would do.
- 66 **Interviewer:** So, is Jesus different from God? Or is Jesus God? Or – ?
- 67 **Mikaela:** Jesus is different from God. God and Jesus are two different
68 people – are two different beings.
- 69 **Interviewer:** Okay. So, for you, is God like Father, Creator?
- 70 **Mikaela:** God is Father, Creator. Jesus is Son, Saviour.
- 71 **Interviewer:** So is that sort of difference important to you?
- 72 **Mikaela:** Important as a religion? as a faith? as – ?
- 73 **Interviewer:** Yeah, to your own faith, to your own beliefs.
- 74 **Mikaela:** I think of – if it was the same person, I wouldn't be able to
75 understand so much than - If it was Jesus and God as one
76 person then I would be able – hold on, I don't get that. There
77 can't be two people inside one person. If they're separate it's a
78 lot easier for me to understand because then I can understand
79 what Jesus has been teaching and what God has handed down,
80 like Old Testament and New Testament.

- 81 **Interviewer:** Have you always believed it that way?
- 82 **Mikaela:** Always. Ever since I was very little. Two different people.
- 83 **Interviewer:** Two different people. Okay. Does that fit with what you've been
84 taught?
- 85 **Mikaela:** Um, well, yes, except that recently reading through the Bible
86 says that God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus are all the – in the same –
87 are the same body, so now it's becoming a little more confusing.
88 I have to think about it a little bit more.
- 89 **Interviewer:** Three persons in the one Trinity? In the one God? Father, Son
90 and Holy Spirit, three persons in one God? So, is that the
91 confusing bit?
- 92 **Mikaela:** That's the confusing bit. I'd like to think of them as separate
93 people but with the same belief.
- 94 **Interviewer:** Okay, we are two different people, two persons with the same
95 human nature. God is three persons, separate distinct, but with
96 the same nature. Does that help?
- 97 **Mikaela:** Sort of, but not completely. I've still got this image of two, three
98 people. Jesus, you see Jesus God, you don't know what he
99 looks like so you pretend you do know, and the Holy Spirit you
100 see flame. That's what I see because that's what's always done
101 in pictures.
- 102 **Interviewer:** How would you explain the Holy Spirit to a friend who didn't
103 believe in God?
- 104 **Mikaela:** Mm, this is hard. Okay, note I'm scratching my head. (laughter)
105 Ah, Holy Spirit, Um – Holy Spirit is a gift, sort of Jesus gave it to
106 us when he ascended into heaven to say yep! I am – I am
107 sending you the Holy Spirit. And I will watch over you as if I
108 were there but I'm not as such – which is confusing me even
109 more. Um – I don't know. It's hard. It's really hard. I can't
110 explain it. I just know. It's – it's like I know that the Holy Spirit's
111 there, but I don't know how to explain it to somebody else.
- 112 **Interviewer:** What are the signs of the Spirit being here? How do you know?
113 Do you see things? Hear things? Think about things? that say
114 to you, "The Holy Spirit's here"?
- 115 **Mikaela:** Well during prayer when I – when I pray before I go to bed, or
116 when I get up, I say, "Yeah, he's here." He's not anywhere else.
117 When bad things happen to you, you just get this – like I'll give
118 you an example. Yesterday, when we got robbed, instead of
119 feeling angry, I actually felt yep – I'm gonna go out and help
120 those people because I feel sorry for them. That's the first thing
121 that came into my head. I wasn't angry. I wasn't disappointed
122 as much as I thought I would probably would have been, but I
123 actually thought, "Yep, I'm gonna go out and help them because
124 they've obviously got a problem that can be fixed." Weird.

- 125 **Interviewer:** Weird.
- 126 **Mikaela:** That is weird.
- 127 **Interviewer:** Is that because you expected yourself to be different from that?
- 128 **Mikaela:** Different as in what?
- 129 **Interviewer:** Well, did you say weird – would you have expected yourself to
130 have been different?
- 131 **Mikaela:** I would have expected myself to be pretty angry, but I wasn't. I
132 was – okay, at first I was upset. I couldn't believe it happened.
133 And then after I said, "Okay, I can get over this. It's just a little
134 hitch." But that's not a hitch for them, there's a problem for
135 them. I'll go help them if I found out who they were.
- 136 **Interviewer:** So how do you explain that difference?
- 137 **Mikaela:** Because it's a difference in thought –
- 138 **Interviewer:** Yeah, you were surprised that you weren't angry, but you feel
139 sorry for these people, so ...
- 140 **Mikaela:** Ah, because lately I've been praying and asking him "If you want
141 me to do anything, just tell me so."
- 142 **Interviewer:** Okay, alright. So "him". Who were you praying to? God? or
143 Jesus?
- 144 **Mikaela:** I pray – I pray directly to God.
- 145 **Interviewer:** So you go to the top man?
- 146 **Mikaela:** Yeah, I go to the top man.
- 147 **Interviewer:** Why would you do that?
- 148 **Mikaela:** Why do I do that? I dunno. Maybe – like I used pray years ago
149 "through your Son Jesus Christ" I go "Heavenly Father, please
150 look after me, look after ." then end it with an "Amen". I don't
151 usually start "Dear Jesus".
- 152 **Interviewer:** So do you ever talk to Jesus? Obviously talking to God there.
153 What about to Jesus?
- 154 **Mikaela:** Do I ever talk to Jesus? Probably at Mass. I pray to Jesus at
155 Mass. Sometimes Mary, but not as often as most people do.
156 People pray to saints to get to God, but I – I personally prefer to
157 go straight to God.
- 158 **Interviewer:** Now, has it always been that way for you with prayer?
- 159 **Mikaela:** Mm-mm. I used to pray to Jesus more but now I only pray to
160 God instead.
- 161 **Interviewer:** Do you know why the change has happened?
- 162 **Mikaela:** I have no idea. It's just – it's just a change.
- 163 **Interviewer:** Are you aware when the change started to happen?

- 164 **Mikaela:** Probably about January this year. I used to say “Dear Jesus”.
 165 Now I go “Dear heavenly Father”. I dunno. It’s just a different –
 166 I was just trying something new.
- 167 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Okay.
- 168 **Mikaela:** It’s working so far.
- 169 **Interviewer:** So you’ve noticed the change in yourself because of prayer?
- 170 **Mikaela:** I have. Prayer is a release but I pray for people that I don’t know
 171 and they don’t know me, just that – I dunno, I just – For the last
 172 – actually, for the last couple of months, I’ve been praying about,
 173 for everyone else and not for myself as such. And I remember
 174 hearing ages and ages ago somebody says ‘If you pray for
 175 somebody else, God will give you something in return.’ So I –
 176 every night I’d say, “Please bless people, please, the people I
 177 love and the people that don’t like me, that I don’t get along with.
 178 It’s just – I dunno – even though I would – I’d never want to wish
 179 anything bad on anybody any more anyway.
- 180 **Interviewer:** So when did you start praying like that? This year?
- 181 **Mikaela:** Yeah, this year. When y’little, like you’d say bed time prayers:
 182 “Jesus, please don’t let father or mother find out that I took 50
 183 cents out of the cookie jar.” y’know.
- 184 **Interviewer:** But you weren’t little last year.
- 185 **Mikaela:** Little last year? Last year, I didn’t pray very much. I had very
 186 low faith.
- 187 **Interviewer:** Okay.
- 188 **Mikaela:** No faith whatsoever. I think it’s been through YCS and – just
 189 being around – being at St Clotilde’s probably played a big part.
 190 It’s probably – like Year 8 I hardly – I went to Church Year 8 and
 191 some of Year 9. In Year 9 – in the middle of Year 9, Year 10,
 192 Year 11, – hardly ever went and then recently I’ve gone every
 193 Sunday – If I could, like if I could get there, but there’s
 194 sometimes when I can’t because there’s just too much stuff on.
 195 But I make an effort. I make an effort just for – after I study.
- 196 **Interviewer:** How does your faith, or your belief in God influence or shape the
 197 way you live your life?
- 198 **Mikaela:** I think about things like – I think about things a little bit more.
 199 Some – like – with this whole – um – Josie and me thing. I like –
 200 try to be very understanding but there’s just a point when –
 201 there’s a – right now I’m not really in the mood to – I ha- think
 202 about it. I think I need a little bit of space to think by myself and
 203 not have to be forced to make a decision right now, but like –
 204 here it does make a bit difference if – I don’t wanna – if
 205 somebody’s being totally – ah, some of the things they think are

- 206 totally immoral I'm not gonna force them to change. I'll just give
207 them an option.
- 208 Like I'm not gonna go – shove it down y'throat with a plunger but
209 – um – um – yeah – there's been times when like I know it's
210 wrong and so therefore I'll walk away and not do it with that
211 person and say "I don't wanna do this. You can do it, but I'm not
212 going to." So I think about things a little bit more than I did.
- 213 **Interviewer:** So you're a lot more self-reflective?
- 214 **Mikaela:** I reflect a lot. When I've done something wrong I sit there for
215 ages thinking: "Yep! Why did I do that? Yep, that's pretty
216 stupid. Maybe next time I'll think a little bit quicker. Yeah. I
217 have done some silly things this year. Yeah, but they – they're
218 all in good humour.
- 219 **Interviewer:** This faith that you've found, that's been given to you, or that's
220 been developing in you, what impact has it had on your attitude
221 towards suffering?
- 222 **Mikaela:** Suffering, as in human suffering?
- 223 **Interviewer:** Yeah.
- 224 **Mikaela:** Well, I've always been quite the little "Greenpeace" lady, but –
225 um – a little bit more now I'm like seeing two sides of the story
226 instead of one, like before I used to be like – y'know, refugees
227 they're allowed in here. Why do we have to – Why does John
228 Howard have to be so selfish 'n' stuff. And now I'm seeing both
229 sides, so I can understand where John Howard's coming from,
230 but I would prefer him to see where they're coming from. But,
231 y'know, the whole refugee thing it is like the Bible teaches us
232 compassion and most of our laws are based on the Bible, like
233 the Ten Commandments, "Love your neighbour as I have loved
234 you." and I just – sometimes you can't understand where he's
235 getting his ideas from, but if I had it my way those refugees
236 would be running around in my school.
- 237 **Interviewer:** Do you know when you started to change your attitude?
- 238 **Mikaela:** Ever since YCS. Being in YCS is being – just the whole Review
239 of Life thing seems amazing like I use that in real life now. I use
240 that every day – Review of Life – I think about –yeah – w-would
241 Jesus want me to do this? Is this the right thing to do? What
242 would be the consequences – what would be the good stuff of
243 this? I use that every single day?
- 244 **Interviewer:** What about your attitude towards death?
- 245 **Mikaela:** I remember I used to fear death and be petrified: I don't want to
246 die. Not now. Where am I gonna go afterwards? Now I'm not –
247 too concerned about death. I – would gladly accept it
248 sometimes. But then at other times – I'm very comfortable with
249 death. I would work in a morgue if I was allowed, but I'm not. I

250 – Look, death is just your soul leaving your body and it's – your
251 body is only a vessel and it's not really –

252 **Interviewer:** So what has happened for you to change your attitude like that?

253 **Mikaela:** Just stuff that happened. Stuff that I've had to go through, I've
254 like slowly gotten over. It's an – like now I think there's just been
255 a big personal change and not really influ- – like I don't want to
256 do down my Dad's path and I don't want to go down my Mum's.
257 Um –

258 **Interviewer:** What was wrong with their paths? What couldn't you accept?

259 **Mikaela:** My Dad is just – he's not what – not the sort of person I want to
260 be. And my Mum, yeah, to a degree, some parts I'd like to be
261 like, but then, there's others I wouldn't want to be. And it's more
262 of a personal choice. Or it's like with – like some of my other
263 friends at other schools. I see them mucking up their lives and
264 I've tried to change them and make – not force them – to come
265 with me to Church but just ask them – but I remember there was
266 a point when I wasn't exactly the best Christian in the world and
267 I wasn't the best Christian in the world, but I tried to force
268 everybody else to come and as a consequence I left that Church
269 and then um – only recently did I go back and actually see them
270 and they said – that's – that's the one of the weirdest things they
271 had is that if you aren't a real Christian, you can't survive there.
272 It's – it's – it's something weird but it's mostly youth they've got a
273 high youth – um – they've got a very big youth group and most
274 of them are full-blown Christians. They wouldn't think of
275 anything else. And that's the weird thing because that – I
276 remember they've always been like that and I – best – one of the
277 best Churches because they all believe. Like you don't have
278 people pretending to believe. That's like a little bit weird. I
279 know that with the Catholic Church some of the kids are forced
280 to go to Church. That I actually prefer that they not be forced if
281 they don't wanna go. It's their own choice – that I go to Church.
282 I'm going to Church. I've made my own choice.

283 **Interviewer:** And in what ways does your faith help you give your life a sense
284 of purpose? a sense of fulfilment?

285 **Mikaela:** Um – I do feel a lot more for – um – I don't feel so alone and
286 don't feel empty – I feel very full – but there's still things I have to
287 grasp and –

288 **Interviewer:** Could you explain that sense of feeling full?

289 **Mikaela:** Feeling full? I feel that if I get any fuller I might explode! I mean
290 – um – full – like he's in my life now and I'm not going to let him
291 leave because I like him where he is and actually I don't think
292 he'll ever leave me and just that footsteps – footsteps poem
293 thing that that sums everything up mostly, most of it up, not all of
294 it. The other bits, well just like – yeah, he's there, when I need

295 his help. He's there when I don't even need his help, but he's
 296 always like giving me a little push in the right direction. He's not
 297 like giving me a full-blown nudge, but I've felt a little push and if I
 298 don't want to go there I'll say, "God, is there an alternative?"

299 **Interviewer:** It sounds like you've had lots of really good experiences.

300 **Mikaela:** For somebody my age.

301 **Interviewer:** This is where we get down to trying to identify when changes
 302 took place for you. Are there any events in your life that have
 303 led to your relationship changing with God? Are there some of
 304 those events that you can talk about?

305 **Mikaela:** Mm, yeah, okay. When I was ten, my parents used to fight all
 306 the time and then that's when I really really hated Church
 307 because I didn't see any point in me going with them if they
 308 weren't even getting along, so then I stopped. And then 13, they
 309 split up and so that was even worse then, like she – they'd both
 310 go to Church they'd both go to the same Church and they'd act
 311 all happy families and at home they'd be separated and living in
 312 the same house. They'd be two different people. So then I just
 313 hated that – never ever – I vowed never to step into a Church
 314 ever again. And like I think it's been – after Mum's divorce, it
 315 finalised everything for me. After the divorce, it finalised
 316 everything for me. So now I didn't have to be forced to go with
 317 Mum or be forced to go with Dad. I could make my own choice.
 318 As it was said on the paper, if I didn't have to want to go to my
 319 Dad's I didn't have to. Then, just to make my Dad happy, I
 320 would go even if I did fight with him.

321 And that's another thing, I used to fight with both of them, really,
 322 really badly, which is – had blues and sit in my room for like
 323 three days straight and not exit. It usually happened in the
 324 holidays. That was good. My Mum didn't have to worry where I
 325 was, but like, yeah, like Dad and me used to have the biggest
 326 fights and I used to sit out in the bush for like an hour and come
 327 home back and then sneak in. Yeah, but that was one of the
 328 changes. And then I joined YCS. I think YCS was the biggest
 329 change. If I wasn't in YCS, I dunno what I would've been doing.
 330 I think – I don't even know how I came to YCS. I just remember
 331 I think it was Gertie. Gertie said, "Hey, Mikaela, wanna come
 332 with me?" And I go, "Yeah, okay, might as well." And now I'm
 333 full-blown into it which is something – I picked up on it quite well.

334 **Interviewer:** So it was your parents splitting up?

335 **Mikaela:** Mostly.

336 **Interviewer:** And then joining YCS?

337 **Mikaela:** Yeah. And there's just random little thoughts like people go
 338 "Mikaela, are you goin' to Church with us tonight?" I'd be going,
 339 "Yeah, might as well." and then like slowly getting back into it

340 like this, just going with different people to different churches
 341 would be in addition to that. And people saying stuff like “What
 342 church do y’ belong to?” And then I would never be able to say
 343 and I actually wanted to be able to say it. “I belong to this
 344 Church and I’ve been here for this long.”

345 **Interviewer:** So, how important is the word “belong” to you?

346 **Mikaela:** Belong? It’s – it’s an important word because everybody want to
 347 belong somewhere. We are naturally mammals. All mammals
 348 stay together – except leopards. I mean my – you wanna be in
 349 a group. Everybody wants to be in a group. An’ most people go
 350 for any group. They’d be happy with any group an’ people –
 351 some people are just picky. And I would’ve been one of those
 352 people who are just picky. I would’ve said “No, I don’t wanna be
 353 in that group because – um – yeah – they drink too much”, or “I
 354 don’t wanna be in this group because they’re just weird” or
 355 something, y’know. “They don’t like me; so I just chose this.” I
 356 said, “What better group to belong to than a Church group.
 357 Then I wouldn’t actually – everybody there would understand me
 358 and they wouldn’t back stab and be horrible. And like if they had
 359 the same beliefs as me, they wouldn’t exactly say, “Oh no,
 360 you’re wrong! That’s not right!” Yeah.

361 **Interviewer:** Okay, good. Has your faith grown stronger or weaker in the last
 362 twelve months?

363 **Mikaela:** That’s a definite “yes”!

364 **Interviewer:** It has, hasn’t it! And we’ve already talked about YCS which has
 365 been an important part of that, hasn’t it.

366 **Mikaela:** Yeah. And I’ve had pretty good RE teachers as well. Miss
 367 Jones, a very good RE teacher. Mr Smith was – like Miss Jones
 368 gave me like that little push I needed. She go “Talk to the
 369 Father. He’s pretty good about stuff like this.” And then Mr
 370 Smith made me think, like “Why am I thinking this about God?”
 371 “What has happened to make me think about God like that?”
 372 And drawing helps. I’m not a very good writer. Like I write stuff
 373 and people go “Huh? What is she talkin’ about?” Drawing
 374 helps!. Painting, sewing – doing little bits of art help. An’ like
 375 most of the people art these days is based on religion
 376 sometimes. Like – like most – like I see people sitting there in
 377 class and they scribble down an eyeball and they’re thinking “I
 378 see they’re looking for something.” Flame, well, they’re not
 379 gonna become pyromaniacs and burn anything, but flame
 380 usually symbolises God. And like Mr Court did an exercise with
 381 us. He says, “Draw God.” An’ he says the best picture he got
 382 was a Year 11 boy who just drew a figure of a human’s shape or
 383 a body and he says, “Because we are part of God, but we don’t
 384 know what he looks like, so I know I am part of him, so I just
 385 drew a human body.” An’ me and my sister drew the same thing

- 386 which is a little bit weird. Yeah, we both drew a flame which was
387 the first thing that came into my head.
- 388 **Interviewer:** So do you think that would be the drawing that you would tend to
389 want to draw each time first of all if you were thinking about
390 God?
- 391 **Mikaela:** So I think now I would – I don't – I think I'd leave my page blank
392 because –
- 393 **Interviewer:** Could you explain why?
- 394 **Mikaela:** Because I don't know what he looks like an' I never will until I go
395 to heaven – if I do go to heaven, which I'm hoping I do. But I
396 don't know what he looks like. I don't even – have any clue. I
397 just know he's there. So I'd leave my page blank and so – I
398 don't know, except because I – from reading the Bible I haven't
399 exactly got the best clue. Because he appeared to Moses as a
400 flame in a bush and like Noah – was just a dove and olive leaves
401 an' – there's different symbols all through the Bible, so you
402 never know. So if I drew all of them maybe that like – yeah.
- 403 **Interviewer:** Or a blank page is in itself a symbol.
- 404 **Mikaela:** Yeah.
- 405 **Interviewer:** You talked about Mr Smith and Miss Jones playing significant
406 roles in your life. Is there anything that your parents would have
407 said or done that would have prompted you to draw closer to
408 God or even to move away from God? Remember you talked
409 about how when they split up you didn't want to have anything to
410 do with God for a while there. Was there anything they would
411 have said or done prior to that that would have drawn you closer
412 to God?
- 413 **Mikaela:** Never! Its – the ritual was youth group Friday, Sunday Church.
414 And that's the way all it was. And in between all that my parents
415 separated and divorced.
- 416 **Interviewer:** And yet they still went to Church?
- 417 **Mikaela:** Yeah, just sort of Christians – um – pretend.
- 418 **Interviewer:** Do you see your Mum as a "pretend" Christian now?
- 419 **Mikaela:** Um – no, not so much. Like she wants to go back to Church but
420 there's ALWAYS something that she has to do or has to be done
421 that will make her not go to Church and I remember hearing
422 ages and ages ago that the Devil tries to put things there that
423 aren't that urgent but you think they are so – I sort of started not
424 thinking like that. Before I go to bed I make sure I pray even if I
425 have – even if I'm - I know I'm about to fall asleep, even if I
426 know I'm about to pass out, I make sure I pray and then I'll go to
427 sleep. Um – I remember Michael said to me he can't EVER go

428 to sleep unless he prays. He'll sit there in the dark go "Yep! This
429 is pretty boring."

430 My Dad – my Dad – um – he goes – he goes "What are y'doing
431 on Sunday?" I say, "I'm going to Church." An' he goes, "Aw
432 yeah, that's good." I go, "Why don't you come?" "I can't. Mirna
433 won't let me." But Mirna goes to Church with me sometimes.
434 So I can't understand that. But – um – Mum – one of the main
435 reasons – Mum an' me – oh, I said I don't wanna go to the
436 Church she wants to go to an' I think she's too scared to go by
437 herself. But I think my sister will end up going with her.

438 **Interviewer:** Do you know why your Mum's too scared?

439 **Mikaela:** I have no idea but I should ask her.

440 **Interviewer:** If you asked your Mum, what do you think that might do to your
441 relationship with her?

442 **Mikaela:** Um – like – earlier when we went on Retreat I remember getting
443 a letter saying asking why I wanted to join the Catholic Church
444 and what was the difference. And I said, "Because it's – it's a
445 personal choice. and it's taken me how long to decide on it. But
446 I had to think about things that I have to give up to be a Catholic
447 and – I'm not missing out on much, but – um – yeah, I wrote
448 back and I said because this is – it's like a vocation. It's
449 something I want to do and I won't stop until I do it. And I might
450 have a few hiccoughs that – um – eventually I get over them.
451 Like I've had a couple of hiccoughs in the last four weeks an' I
452 just thought: "Well, find, I'll leave that there an' I'll just jump over
453 that. I think well that hiccough wasn't that big, but there is –
454 yeah, there's I – I can see some coming, I can see some huge
455 hiccoughs coming.

456 **Interviewer:** Okay. So when one of these huge hiccoughs comes, what do
457 you think would run through your mind?

458 **Mikaela:** Pros and cons. If I do it, what will happen? If I don't, what will
459 happen? What am I – what do I really, really want? And like –
460 people – the selfish thing to be thinking – that's what I want. I
461 don't care what anybody else thinks. I know exactly the
462 example I've got in my head, but I don't want to say it.

463 **Interviewer:** That's okay. You don't have to.

464 **Mikaela:** But yeah, I can see that it might affect somebody else if my
465 choice is – if my choice is – the right one it will affect the other
466 person, but then they'll understand why I made that choice. And
467 if I chose the wrong one, it affects both of us.

468 **Interviewer:** And I'm just guessing at the moment – you can tell me whether
469 I'm right or wrong – that you started to think this way once you
470 got yourself into reviewing.

471 **Mikaela:** Yeah.

- 472 **Interviewer:** Can you identify a time when you had to make a choice between
473 YCS and something else?
- 474 **Mikaela:** YCS and something else?
- 475 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Were you ever faced with that decision?
- 476 **Mikaela:** Not using the Review of Life?
- 477 **Interviewer:** Yeah – of coming to the meetings and being part of it or going
478 and doing something else.
- 479 **Mikaela:** I'm trying to think of a good example. I can't think of one.
- 480 **Interviewer:** You don't know because it hasn't happened to you.
- 481 **Mikaela:** No, it hasn't. I haven't actually had a situation. Like there've
482 been days when I'm sick and you obviously can't come to the
483 meetings, but like when Rod asked me to go and get food with
484 him and it takes him a good half-hour to make a sandwich, I
485 think "Mm, I don't want to. I'd rather stay here and finish off
486 what we started", but maybe there might be a situation coming
487 up, maybe.
- 488 **Interviewer:** Remember you said that when you came to YCS, it was sort of
489 like tagging along with Gertie, you think.
- 490 **Mikaela:** I think I was a bit of a "tag-along."
- 491 **Interviewer:** You're not really sure about that?
- 492 **Mikaela:** I have no idea. I just remember – I do remember there was one
493 stage when I did come to YCS and they kept reviewing the same
494 thing over and over, and I just thought, "No, this is pretty boring.
495 I'm leaving." Gertie came back and she joined YCS. I thought,
496 "Yep I might – I'll come for a little while." I came and like it
497 started getting interesting so I thought, "Yeah, I'll stay here." and
498 then it was just like "Yeah, I'm staying here permanently."
- 499 **Interviewer:** What made it interesting?
- 500 **Mikaela:** Um – actually we didn't really do the Review of Life but – this is
501 before Adelaide – but we still managed to talk things through
502 and think about them as a group and like though we had little
503 tiffs 'n' stuff, by the end of the meeting we'd have something
504 solved or like agree to disagree or – yeah, it's better than leaving
505 it, like leaving it and not finishing it off. To finish things off and
506 not leave them hanging.
- 507 **Interviewer:** Why was that important to you?
- 508 **Mikaela:** Because I hate being left in the lurch and not finding out about
509 things and not – um – knowing what's gonna – like I know that I
510 don't know what's gonna happen next – I don't even know
511 what's gonna happen tomorrow, but I would hate to know what
512 the topic was and not find out what the solution was. I like
513 things to be finished off, to be solved, like I think as I said before

514 when my parents were separated, it was like “Are they going to
515 get back together? Are they not?” But when they got divorced,
516 it was like END. Nothing else. So that was like a good example
517 of a solution.

518 **Interviewer:** The last thing is whether you see that as something that is
519 central to your personality?

520 **Mikaela:** Solving things?

521 **Interviewer:** Yeah.

522 **Mikaela:** Ah, it’s not the main point of my personality but I do keep it – like
523 there’s times when I really cannot be bothered wasting my time
524 trying to solve it because I know that in the end, whatever
525 solution I come up with, it won’t be used, but I’ll – like I’ll give it a
526 – give it a good try, but I’m not gonna spend all my time on one
527 thing for one person who won’t even use it.

528 **Interviewer:** So things have to have a purpose?

529 **Mikaela:** They have to have – if – I’d actually like it if the person actually
530 considered it as a really good option, but not as like a “Yeah,
531 whatever” or a “I’ll think about it.” But yeah, if they said “I’ll think
532 about it” that would be good because I know they probably
533 would, ’cause some people say it just to palm me off.

534 **Interviewer:** You’ve used the word “option” quite a bit.

535 **Mikaela:** I like that word. I like options. I hate having just one choice. If I
536 had a choice between chocolate and vanilla, I’d probably go “Do
537 you have anything else?” Y’know? I want to have an array of
538 things to choose from and not just one or two, but like with
539 Maximilian, y’know, the whole thing with Maximilian Kolbe and
540 the crowns. I think I would’ve gone, “Yeah, I want both.
541 Because I can’t make a choice I’ll take both.”

542 **Interviewer:** So that obviously has an impact on your faith, this whole options
543 thing, this number of choices: you go to this Church or you go
544 that Church, narrowing it down?

545 **Mikaela:** Yeah, I had two choices. I had Lutheran Church or Catholic
546 Church. I don’t know why – I have no idea why I thought
547 Catholic Church over Lutheran Church. I – like I remember
548 when I was little I used to be fascinated by Catholic churches
549 because it was totally different from mine and I had been in a
550 Catholic Church and a Catholic school for five years. – Um – I
551 went to a Catholic Primary school and I had Fr Timms as my
552 priest and I could never understand everybody else would be
553 doing things and they’d have to go like (whispers) “Mikaela, you
554 gotta go on your knees.” “What? Okay!” It used to be
555 something following everybody else and then I decided, well, I’ll
556 make my own choice – be – grow up – start making my own

557 decisions instead of having everybody else telling me what to
558 do. You're nodding and smiling.

559 **Interviewer:** Not for any research purposes. More for just the joy of listening
560 to your growing up.

561 **Mikaela:** (laughing) You'll see me in ten years and you go, "That's
562 Mikaela. I know her."