

Mikaela's journal

1 Week One

2 *If you wrote the story of your life now, what title would you give the story?*

3 *Reflect on why you would name it in that way.*

4 *How many chapters would you give your story? Name the chapters and*

5 *explain the significance of the chapter headings.*

6 *Where do God and religion fit into your story? Choose the chapter of your*
7 *story in which God and religion seem to play a large part and write about why*
8 *they were major characters in that part of your life.*

9

10 My life title would be *Elevator*. We all have ups and downs. In my life I have
11 had ups and downs and sometimes felt like I wasn't moving at all.

12 The first chapter would be called *The First Step and the First Button*. This
13 would be when I first had good, but this was all to do with my parents. I was a
14 good child throughout my life but I never seemed to know much about life
15 picking up on small pieces of a huge puzzle that I would probably never figure
16 out. Slowly but surely by the work of a lot of older people I began to tell me
17 things even when I didn't want to believe it.

18 The next chapter was the *Plunge*. It was like being on a bungee jump that
19 didn't rebound. Travelling down without slowly. This was when my parents
20 broke up. I didn't care life or anything it stood for. This is where I met Josie.
21 Though right now our relationship is not on the best of terms she somehow
22 made the plunge seem less like a plunge and more like a dip. But personally I
23 know that no matter what anyone said I was falling. They couldn't help me
24 and even if they could they probably wouldn't know how to. I pushed
25 everyone away including my parents. I refused for anyone to feel my pain or
26 let myself become vulnerable.

27 *Next Floor Clotilde Religious Team* is my next chapter. I found that religion
28 wasn't boring and began to be fun. I began exploring me and my thoughts
29 and what I wanted from my life spiritually and physically. I soon found myself
30 on the trail to become a Catholic with Young Christian Students becoming a
31 motive. To be a person who receives Holy Communion for the fact that it
32 brings me closer to God, than just because I know I can without having the
33 faith and belief in anything it stands for.

34 *Joan's Spiritually Mentor* was my next floor and I got off as soon as I could.
35 Joan has strong faith and with her strong faith I came to believe that I too
36 could have faith exactly like her. Joan though she didn't know it was the
37 person I placed my getting Catholicism on. I needed her to help me to guide
38 me and give me advice when a lot of my other friends turned me away from
39 the right path. But the Joan floor soon disappeared and yet again I was
40 swamped with feelings of mistrust, hatred, rebellion and no faith.

41 I thought by Joan leaving me God was also leaving me. Abandoning me just
42 like everyone else had done, he was just another person out to hurt me. So
43 the next chapter is called *Basement*.

44 I had hit the basement. Not only did I not follow rules that were set for me, I
45 refused to do anything if I felt it was a waste of my precious breathing time.

46 Slowly the friends that I made changed into people I couldn't relate to. I
47 couldn't understand why they treated me like they did. Slowly but surely my
48 finger reached for the button to take me away from where I was.

49 The floor I'm on right now is *Under Construction*: to rebuild my life and do the
50 things that I planned to do when I was younger and find friends who are
51 wanting the same things from life as I want and not trying to make me feel
52 insignificant. To find God again in my life and instead of asking him for things
53 just receive what he thinks is good for me.

54

55 Week Two

56 *Recall a moment in your life when you were convinced that God exists or*
57 *doesn't exist and that God cares or doesn't care for you.*

58 *Describe the situation.*

59 *Try to recall who or what acted as the catalyst, that is, which prompted you to*
60 *recognise God's presence or absence in the situation in which you found*
61 *yourself.*

62 *Describe how your thinking about God changes because of your encounter*
63 *with this person or event.*

64

65 The major point in my life where I really came to know God was when I first
66 came to St Clotilde's. Up to this point I used to shut myself away from the
67 world and mostly through the hurt that I had felt as a result of my parents
68 break up and the continual abuse that I suffered from my Dad's abusive and
69 negative behaviour. Up until that point I didn't believe that God existed and
70 that if there was a higher being he/she was just putting obstacles in front of
71 me to make me feel bad about myself and others in my life.

72 I remember the day I began to believe in God heaps more was when I was
73 invited to Mass by someone. They said it may make me feel better about
74 myself. I was hoping it did. I felt a little bit out of place but I soon grew to
75 coming more often. Then going with Joan to Church on Sunday. Eventually I
76 began to realise what effect it had on me. Through Joan and that other
77 person inviting me my faith was re-ignited to some degree. But I knew it
78 would take more than just to Church to make me feel God, even more to
79 believe in him. I sorta felt as if I need to see and hear more.

80 Finally after months of contemplation I decided to become a Catholic. Though
81 recently it has been put on hold so I can start TAFE, I'm sure that it will work
82 out. The Catholic idea was a sign that there was a God that he did exist
83 because the idea seemed to come out of no where and felt so right at the
84 time.

85 I remember feeling worth and a sudden burst of energy and happiness when
86 the idea or epiphany came to me. I then told Joan and she said it was a sign
87 that God was making contact with me because I made contact or finally read
88 the signs he was sending me through my whole life.

89 God does exist and I know it almost hands on!!

90

91 Week Three

92 *Recall a religious education lesson that challenged you to change your ideas*
93 *about your faith. Reflect on how your faith changed because of that lesson.*

94 *Try to recall how the change came about. What did you reflect on? Who*
95 *helped you to re-think your belief?*

96 *How did the change in what you believed affect your attitude towards God and*
97 *your religion?*

98

99 A religious lesson that changed my ideas about my faith was in Year 10, Miss
100 Jones's class. The majority of my peers were Catholics but somehow the way
101 they reacted to religious education proved that they were not strong Catholics
102 like I wanted to be.

103 We were talking about human rights to do with teasing. Three or four boys
104 claimed that the people they teased deserved it. I began to think what Jesus
105 would do. Would he tease someone if they deserved it when the majority of
106 the people teased didn't deserve to be teased? This was not long before I
107 became a permanent member of YCS.

108 Miss Jones then began to tell them that teasing was due to people having a
109 low self esteem. This made me think that people with a low self esteem may
110 also have low faith in God and be pretending to be Christians for their parents
111 but not for themselves. At the time I had only just begun Church and had my
112 idea about converting to Catholicism.

113 My belief I now find to be wrong is that some people have NO good in them.
114 But Miss Jones proved it through a story about a saint who began his life
115 stealing and then converted his evil ways into Catholicism and then before he
116 died became a priest.

117 God didn't make us evil but gave us freedom of choice and when Adam and
118 Eve ate the apple we began to realise what was right and what was wrong.
119 We still weren't evil and never have been. It's just that the devil lures people
120 into his trap and seduces our minds so our freedom of choice has been taken
121 away. This made me realise that the boys in my class had been seduced into
122 teasing and had their minds closed over not letting them see their actions and
123 what it does to people.

124 God created everyone in an equal stance and that through mutual respect we
125 can understand each other. Our religion teaches us to do unto others as they
126 would do unto you.

127 So that's what I plan to do. Be able to say sorry, accept sorry and be able to
128 understand when I and many people are in the wrong.

129

130 Week Four

131 *Consider your future life as you would like it to become. What would be the*
132 *main theme of the next chapter of your book?*

133 *Give the chapter a title and explain its significance.*

134 *How would you like your relationship with God to be in the future? What is*
135 *there in your life at present or your present relationship with God that tells you*
136 *that such a future is possible?*

137

138 *Ever After*

139 You know how in stories or fairy tales the prince and princess lived happily
140 every after, well that's what I want: to live happily for ever. To live my life
141 instead of loathing it how some people do. Unfortunately, just like Job, God
142 gives us trials and tribulations to test our faith.

143 God in the past has tested me and sometimes I have failed and other times I
144 have succeeded in proving to him that I am a good person some of the time.
145 In the future I would like God to be more in my life to be with him in an "ever
146 after" scenario.

147 The main theme is Love because it is and will always be a big part of my life
148 and many others. I want to be able to love God for the rest of my life and my
149 life after death be with him in heaven if I am just that little bit worthy of it.

150 I see that in my relationship with him how I have just begun to see what he
151 wants me to see about my friends and the people around me, maybe even
152 possibly my life. Through seeing what he wants me to do with my life, I can
153 see that he has shown me what he wants me to do with my life.

154 If I just follow him, I will be alright because he knows a lot more about me than
155 I think I even will. He knows more than I would ever realise. So if I follow his
156 lead, my life will not only be a fairy tale but something better.

157

158 Concluding Remarks

159 *After looking back on what you have written in your journal, are there any final*
160 *reflections about your life and your faith that you would like to offer to draw*
161 *this part of your life to a close?*

162

163 I think that there are some things I have no control over like Sue and my
164 friendship with her. I never saw it coming and because I have no control or
165 influence over her mind – not that friends should – I cannot help her, not if she
166 doesn't want it, or can't see that I only want the best for her.

167 My faith was based on what others wanted for me, but slowly I have begun to
168 realise that it is my choice and my choice alone. Jesus is my saviour and I
169 thank God that he was here to help me remove the plank and see what was
170 wanted for me.