



Diocese of Fargo
Our Stories of Faith

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Beth Lemer's Story



My husband Bo and I had really worked on our marriage formation. But the hardest part of the formation was praying together. It was awkward and uncomfortable because it forced us to show an intimate side of ourselves that we almost never show to people even in relationships. So although Bo and I tried to pray, it rarely happened. One of the problems was that I was used to doing different types of non-Christian meditations such as Reiki and energy work. About two months after our wedding I heard God calling me to give everything in my life to Him. I put up my barriers immediately and told him no. I had tried going down that road of 'religion' before and since I was young and didn't understand it lead to a lot of unhealthy living. I didn't really read many spiritual books at that time and just didn't understand my prayer life. But that tiny little voice inside me would not go away, I figured there must be something to this and maybe this time it would be different. So before I went to sleep one night I told Him He could have it all – my life, my heart. I

surrendered to His call. Within two months of this, God put people, books and experiences in my life that only lead me closer to Him. This did not come without a lot of pain and heartbreak. Moving closer to Him meant leaving behind New Age practices of meditation. Leaving these practices meant leaving my community of fellow energy workers. All of them were hurt and upset at the fact I left and why I left. I had made mistakes myself, instead of warning



my friends about the dangers in New Age I just ended up leaving them feeling insulted and judged. It took my friends and I a long time to come to terms with what had happened; we have since made peace about it. Losing my place in their community left me feeling completely alone. So I went searching for a new community. About a year after my 'reversion' or return to the practice of the Catholic faith, I attended a Cursillo retreat. Little did I know what that would mean to me. Because of Cursillo, I now gather together with a small group of ladies weekly for prayer and fellowship. Their support has aided me through the rough times in this faith journey. They have always been there to talk to when things have become spiritually difficult. About six months or so after attending the Cursillo retreat, I began formation for the Third Order Carmelites. This has helped tremendously in aiding me in prayer. It hasn't always been easy for me to trust what happens in prayer. I have just begun my journey in formation for the Carmelites. Since my 'reversion' I had been putting up personal road blocks sabotaging my prayer life and stunting its growth. Part of the Carmelite spirituality is praying all day in many ways. For example, turning the music off while I am cleaning, taking the dog for a walk, it is Him I am with and talking to during these chores. Furthermore, using my imagination while reading the bible makes my prayer life anything but boring. God gave us imaginations for a reason. When reading the scriptures I can put myself

in Jesus' time, see what He looks like, talk to Him and even bring people who need His love to him and intercede for them. I often wonder, when people become Christian they first think, "That's it, I've given my life to the Lord and now I don't have to work at anything because God will take care of it all." But God wants us to be in a *relationship* with Him. To be in a relationship takes work, it takes gaining trust and faith. It is a life-long journey. After all that has



happened in my life thus far, bringing up prayer to my husband Bo takes next to nothing. That insecurity is gone. And Bo also initiates prayer before supper and before bed and other times. We may have gone into our marriage without fully showing our most intimate self in prayer, but as our marriage continues to grow and mature, so does our prayer life.

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