

SUPPORT

AFTER ABORTION



**GOD OFFERS FORGIVENESS, HEALING, AND HOPE
A PRAYER BOOKLET FOR WOMEN**

A joint resource from The Word Among Us Partners
& Support After Abortion

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About This Prayer Booklet

I am very grateful to share this *Support After Abortion: God Offers Forgiveness, Healing, and Hope* with you. Did you pick it up because you've had an abortion and are hurting right now? If so, I want you to know that God loves you and that in this booklet, you will find some truths that could be life-changing for you.

I had a strong calling to write this booklet because my ministry works with women in need of healing after their abortion. I'd like to share that experience with you.

After a Sunday Eucharistic service at the Maryland Correctional Institute for Women, someone mentioned that two ladies were having a hard time coping with the effects of their abortions. My heart went out to them. I asked myself, "Do they know and believe that God loves them and forgives them? Do they know that their child forgives them?" I didn't have an opportunity to speak with them, and sadly, I've never had a chance to meet them.

During my drive home from the prison, I began to think about writing a prayer booklet specifically for women in prison who've had an abortion. Whatever the reason a woman chooses to have an abortion, it profoundly changes her. A woman who has had an abortion may suffer emotionally, spiritually, and physically.

The Word Among Us first published *After Abortion: God Offers Forgiveness, Healing, and Hope* in 2008 (and now available in Spanish) and distributed it to women in prison through chaplains and volunteers. However, after a request from **Project Rachel Ministry**, an after-abortion ministry of the Archdiocese

About This Prayer Booklet

of Arlington, Virginia, I adapted the booklet to make it appropriate for any woman suffering the effects of an abortion.

This booklet is not a long read. There are seven reflections based on Scripture with questions to prompt you in personal heart-to-heart conversations with God. Begin each reflection by asking God to bless your time alone with him. Don't rush to finish a reflection in one session. Stay with a Scripture verse or suggested action until you feel you are ready to move on. Revisit a reflection as often as you feel a need. You are a unique person on your journey to a deeper relationship with God and toward the forgiveness, healing, and hope he offers.

I'd like to suggest that you journal your thoughts throughout this journey. Treat yourself to a paper journal or use your phone, laptop, or tablet to take notes. There are also blank pages at the end of this booklet you can use to journal.

This booklet's goal is not to replace personal or group counseling but to offer support and comfort to any woman who finds herself suffering after her abortion. My hope for women who are already receiving help from a healing ministry is that it will bring them into a more profound experience of God's love and his limitless mercy.

I'm also aware that there are women and men in need of healing for the role they played in encouraging or supporting someone else's abortion. If that's you, know that you too are a beloved child of the Father, and this booklet is for you. (A men's version is also available in English and Spanish.)

For pastors, priests, counselors, and other professionals, I hope you will find this prayer booklet helpful as you minister to women in a one-on-one setting or in a group.

Support After Abortion

A companion booklet is available for those who prefer to start with a non-faith-forward healing approach: *Support after Abortion: Keys to Hope and Healing*. This booklet is a joint resource from **The Word Among Us Partners** and **Support After Abortion**.

If you feel the need for immediate support or additional resources, please reach out to **Support After Abortion** (www.supportafterabortion.com; 844-289-HOPE [4673]). Their staff—many of whom have walked in your footsteps—are available to help and provide each person with compassionate support and care.

You can also use **Project Rachel Ministry's** online map to identify a Project Rachel Ministry in your state (www.hopeafterabortion.com). Additional resources and support organizations are listed in the back of this booklet.

My prayer is that each person who reads this booklet will be incredibly blessed. If you go to God seeking his forgiveness and healing, you will experience both. God loves you and wants you to have hope!



Angela

Angela M. Burrin
The Word Among Us Partners

Reflection One

The Father's Heart

I Am a Beloved Daughter of My Heavenly Father

I have loved you with an everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3)
God, how could you love me? I've had an abortion.

You are my child, and I am your Father. (See 1 John 3:1)
But God, I've killed my baby. Am I still your child?

It is my desire to lavish my love on you. (See Ephesians 1:3)
God, I don't deserve your love.

If you've had a conversation like this with God, you are not alone. Many women who are suffering emotionally, spiritually, or even physically from abortion have these thoughts too. But starting today, your heavenly Father wants you to know and experience—maybe for the first time or in a deeper way—that he loves you. Yes, you are his child—his beloved daughter. That is his heart's desire. And he is saying to you:

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I know the plans I have for you: plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, and I will bring you back from captivity. (Jeremiah 29:11-14)

Your Father knows everything about you—your past, present, and your future. But how well do you know him? Do you know that God is love? Do you know that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three Persons in one God, a communion of love, who have longed to share their love with others from all eternity? That’s why our Father created us.

God’s love also flowed over into the beautiful world that he created for us. The Bible tells us that everything God created was good! And as he did for our first parents, Adam and Eve, God wants us to experience the joy of walking and talking with him.

Action

- Take a few minutes to think of some of the good things God has created that you can see, hear, feel, or taste.
- Now, thank him for his love in giving you these good things.

Throughout creation, you have always been on God’s mind. You were not a mistake—even if your mother’s pregnancy was unintended or even if she tried to abort you.

Truths about God’s love fill the Bible. Here are five more for you to think about today.

I Am a Beloved Daughter of My Heavenly Father

1. God chose you even before creating the world (see Ephesians 1:4-6).
2. God knew you before you were conceived (see Jeremiah 1:5).
3. God knew the date of your birth and where you would live (see Acts 17:26).
4. God knows every hair on your head (see Matthew 10:30).
5. God knows everything that you think, do, and say (see Psalm 139:1-4).

Action

- Read these scriptural truths again. What thoughts do you have?

Do you sometimes ask yourself, “Why did God create me?” Well, the reason is that God planned for you to be one of his beloved daughters—to experience his love and to love him in return. Did you know that God longs for you to call him “Abba,” which means “Dad” (see Galatians 4:6)?

Action

- If you’ve never called God “Dad,” do so now. Next, quiet your mind and listen as your heavenly Dad says, “(Insert your name), you are my beloved daughter. I love you.”

Another scriptural truth about God is that he is always the same. He never changes. God was, is, and always will be full of love. The abortion (or abortions) you’ve had—for whatever

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reason—can't change God's love for you. Whatever you are experiencing—guilt, anger, grief, regret, shame, self-condemnation, loneliness, depression, or even indifference to your abortion—can't change God's thoughts toward you. When you were baptized, you

I am my Father's beloved daughter. He delights in me.

became his beloved daughter, and you will be his beloved daughter for all eternity. That is an awesome truth to repeat

to yourself every morning when you wake up or whenever you look in a mirror. Say to yourself, "I am my Father's beloved daughter. He delights in me."

How do we learn more about who God is and how he wants us to live day by day? Try to find some time every day to pray and to read a few Scripture passages. Prayer times are especially powerful moments during the day when you can talk and listen to your Father. His love for you is personal. Don't wait any longer. Start having a prayer time—a quiet time alone with God—today. Your heavenly Father is waiting for you!

Truths to Review

- God created me to know him, to experience his love, and to love him in return.
- Everything that God created is good.
- I am my Father's beloved daughter. This has always been his heart's desire for me.
- My Father invites me to spend time alone with him every day, talking and listening to him.

Following Up

- Talk with your heavenly Father about whatever is on your heart. He is a safe person to talk to. And he will always listen to you. You can tell him whatever is on your mind. Ask him to reassure you that you are his beloved daughter.
- Memorize: “I know the plans I have for you . . . plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).
- In a journal, phone, tablet, or another device, write a letter to your heavenly Father. Then listen and write your Father’s answer to you.

Pray

Heavenly Father, thank you for creating me in your image and likeness. I’m grateful that you call me your beloved daughter. Help me know this truth in my mind and in my heart at all times—not just when I’m having a good day. Holy Spirit, reveal to me, especially in my prayer times, more about who my Father is and just how much he loves me.

Reflection Two

The Father's Unconditional Love

My Heavenly Father Loves Me— No Strings Attached

Your heavenly Father has always loved you and will never stop loving you. Unlike so many of our other relationships, our relationship with God has no strings attached. Nothing you do could ever make your Father love you more. And nothing you have done wrong—including having an abortion—could make him love you less. His love for you is unconditional. Do you believe this truth?

Jesus understood his Father's heart of love and wanted his followers to believe and experience it too. So he told them the parable of the prodigal son:

There was a man who had two sons. The older son was content to live at home with his father. But the younger son wanted more excitement in his life. After getting his share of his inheritance, he left his father's home and lived an irresponsible way of life until he became penniless. After trying to survive on pigs' food, he decided to go back home. He resigned himself to the fact that the best he could expect to be was one of his father's

My Heavenly Father Loves Me—No Strings Attached

servants. How could he hope to be a son after turning his back on his father? But the father had never stopped loving his son. Every day the father looked out into the distance in the hope his son would return. When at last the father saw his son far off, he ran to him and hugged him. He put on him a robe, shoes, and a ring. Then the father threw a big party for him. (Luke 15:11-32)

In the parable of the prodigal son, the father, who represents our heavenly Father, agreed to give his son his share of the inheritance, which would allow him to leave home. He knows that the life his son is choosing will not fulfill his dreams. But he doesn't stop him. How his heart must have broken as he watched his younger son turn his back on the life they had lived together, in search of happiness elsewhere!

But no matter what the son had done—or would do—his father loved him. The father decided that he would never give up hope of seeing his son again. And every day, he eagerly watched and waited, longing for his son's return.

Nothing can change who you are in his eyes. Your Father's love for you has always been unconditional.

Whatever past choices you have made that you now know to be wrong, you have never stopped being your heavenly Father's beloved daughter. Nothing can change who you are in his eyes. Your Father's love for you has always been unconditional. Although his heart wept when you chose to have an abortion, he still loved you.

Action

- Your Father’s unconditional love for you is such an important truth. Take a few minutes to reflect on this truth. Talk to your Father about it.
- Write in a notebook about anything that might be preventing you from experiencing this truth. Then write down anything you hear from your Father.

Important decisions can be difficult. Sometimes, there can be a tug of war inside us. We might know what is right, but we still struggle with our decision. The apostle Paul knew all about the struggle we experience between right and wrong. He wrote, “I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate” (Romans 7:15).

The chances are that the prodigal son also struggled with the choices he made. Perhaps he struggled with the decision to ask for his inheritance early so that he could leave his father’s home. While enjoying his new freedom, he may have struggled too. It may have been hard to accept his new friends’ invitation to join in activities that challenged the values his father had taught him. And then, perhaps he struggled with the decision of returning to his father and wondered whether he could bear the pain of living as a servant—not as a son—in his father’s house.

In your own life, have you experienced any struggles with decisions you had to make? How about the day you learned about your unintended pregnancy? Did fear paralyze you? Did you panic? Did you find yourself in shock, saying, “Oh, no,

this can't be happening to me"?

Then, when you began to think about whether to have the baby or to have an abortion, did you find it challenging to make a decision? In such situations, shock and fear often cloud our thinking. Those feelings can lead

us to make an impulsive or panicked decision. This is especially true if you have had past trauma in your life.

Remember: you weren't alone. Your Father was there with you. His eyes were on you. He never left your side in all that you were going through.

Remember: you weren't alone. Your Father was there with you. His eyes were on you. He never left your side in all that you were going through.

Action

- Journal about any of the thoughts and fears you may have had when you learned about your unintended pregnancy. If you sense that your Father is speaking to your heart, write down what he says. That way, you can go back later and read.

The prodigal son lost his inheritance because of his personal choices. But he remained his father's child. You too may have lost family, friends, reputation, or material belongings because of your choices. But you have never stopped being your heavenly Father's beloved daughter.

Of course, not all of the prodigal son's choices were wrong. In the end, he returned to his father—even if that meant he would

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live as a servant in his own home. His father, who had forgiven him for everything he did, was overjoyed to see him. Even though he was elderly, the father ran toward his son as soon as he spotted him on the horizon. What an emotional reunion that must have been!

In the final scene of the parable, the father throws a big party for his younger son. However, his older son has a tough time accepting his father's unconditional love for his brother. When he complains, his father replies with these beautiful words:

“Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”
(Luke 15:31-32)

What is your relationship like with your heavenly Father? Are you still a long way off, beginning to turn back, or reunited with him? Remember: your Father's love for you is unconditional, and he wants nothing more than to have you come to him.

Truths to Review

- My Father loves me unconditionally.
- My abortion does not change my Father's love for me. He is always waiting for me to come to him.
- My Father is always with me. I am never alone.

Following Up

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you imagine your Father hugging you tightly in his strong arms. Listen to him saying, “I love you. I’ve never stopped loving you.” Stay with this experience as long as you want.
- Memorize: “I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate” (Romans 7:15).
- Memorize: “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found” (Luke 15:31-32).
- Journal any of your thoughts and feelings related to this parable. If any questions come to mind that you want to ask your Father, write them down. Over time, he may answer many of them.

Pray

Father, just like the prodigal son, I have made many wrong choices—including my abortion—and have often turned my back on you. Father, I thank you for loving me unconditionally and always waiting for me to come back to you. Please give me your comfort today. Let me see your smiling face and hear you say, “I will never stop loving you—and there are no strings attached.”

Reflection Three

Jesus' Birth and Public Ministry

Jesus Wants to Have a Personal Relationship with Me

In his perfect timing, our heavenly Father sent his only Son, Jesus, to this earth: “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

Jesus, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of a teenage Jewish girl named Mary, was born in unplanned circumstances, in a stable nearly a hundred miles from Joseph and Mary’s home.

Jesus’ first visitors were some shepherds from the hills around the town. Angels had appeared to them, singing, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors” (Luke 2:14). And sometime later, led by a new star in the sky, three wise men came to bow down and worship Jesus, offering him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (see Matthew 2:1-12).

Action

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you picture the stable in Bethlehem in your mind. Place yourself in it. What are the sights and sounds? What are you doing or saying? Enjoy the moment!
- If you are experiencing turmoil in your life—especially over your abortion—look at Jesus lying in the manger. He is the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). Ask Jesus to give you his peace. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you” (John 14:27).

Jesus was thirty years old when he began his public ministry. And in the Gospel of Mark, we can read Jesus’ first recorded words: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news” (Mark 1:14-15). What a powerful message! But it wasn’t his own message. Jesus said, “I tell you; the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise” (John 5:19). The message came straight from God’s fatherly heart.

Once Jesus had started his public ministry, news about him quickly spread across the countryside. So, wherever Jesus began to teach—on hillsides, in towns, around the Sea of Galilee, or in the temple areas—crowds gathered around him. They hung onto his every word. Jesus wasn’t prejudiced; he welcomed everyone. And for this, the religious leaders often criticized him—especially when he ate with tax collectors and sinners (see Matthew 9:9-13).

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Jesus' disciples were also taken aback by some of the things he did: he not only taught the crowds but miraculously fed them (see Mark 6:30-44); he welcomed parents to bring their little children to him for a blessing (see Mark 10:13-16); and he talked to those who were not of the Jewish faith—such as the Samaritan woman at a village well (see John 4:1-42).

Jesus is always ready to meet our needs too!

The more we read the Gospels, the more we see that Jesus was always ready to meet the needs of those who came to him. Day after day, for three years, Jesus performed miracles—healing the sick, casting out demons, cleansing the lepers, and raising the dead (see Mark 1–5). And Jesus is always ready to meet our needs too!

Action

- Read some of the previously mentioned Scripture passages. Picture the scenes in your mind. Enjoy learning more about Jesus.
- Journal about your thoughts and feelings. If a particular Scripture verse jumps out at you, write it down, along with why it is so meaningful.

Jesus healed not only physical illnesses but also spiritual needs. One evening, a woman who was known to be a prostitute sought out Jesus. She found him eating dinner in the home of one of the religious leaders. Entering uninvited, she knelt, washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. She then kissed his feet and poured perfume on them. Jesus accepted her beautiful act of love—a public display of her sorrow for her sins. While

Jesus Wants to Have a Personal Relationship with Me
others were shocked at her behavior, Jesus knew the sincerity of her heart and said, “Your sins are forgiven” (Luke 7:48).

Action

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you recreate this scene in your mind. Place yourself in it. You are the woman. What would you feel as you approach Jesus? Why did you come to him? Why do you shed tears as you kneel at his feet? What do you say as you dry Jesus’ feet with your hair? What do you hear him say to you as you kiss his feet and pour perfume over them?
- Stay with this scene for a while. Allow Jesus to fill you with his love and acceptance.
- Journal your thoughts and feelings about this scene. Write down anything you hear Jesus saying to you.

Jesus was full of love and compassion for the prostitute who fell at his feet. And he is full of love and compassion for you too. If you feel unworthy of coming to Jesus because of your abortion or afraid that he will reject you, remember how he responded to the prostitute. Jesus loves you. Your dignity and worth are not based on what you have done or haven’t done, but because you are his sister and a beloved daughter of his Father.

Jesus loves you. Your dignity and worth are not based on what you have done or haven’t done, but because you are his sister and a beloved daughter of his Father.

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You may think that Jesus wouldn't want a personal relationship with you because of your abortion or because of other things you have done. But let this Scripture verse reassure you of his love for you: "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me" (Revelation 3:20). There is a famous painting of Jesus standing outside a door. But Jesus can't open the door because there is no handle on his side. You have to open it to let him in!

Jesus wants to be in your life. He wants to be your first love. All you have to do is open the door of your heart and invite Jesus in. He is faithful. He will come into your life.

Truths to Review

- Jesus is the Word of God and the Prince of Peace.
- Jesus reached out to tax collectors and sinners. He spent three years teaching and healing all who came to him.
- Jesus knows about my abortion, and he still loves me.
- Jesus wants to have a personal relationship with me.

Following Up

- Respond to Jesus' invitation to have a personal relationship with him. In your own words, invite him to come into your heart. Or pray, "Jesus, I hear you saying to me that you want a personal relationship with me. Jesus, thank you for accepting me just as I am. I am sorry for my sins. Please come into my life. I want to experience your loving presence and to do what pleases you."

Jesus Wants to Have a Personal Relationship with Me

- If you already have a relationship with Jesus, take a few minutes to recommit your life to him.
- Memorize: “Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me” (Revelation 3:20).
- Write a letter to Jesus in your journal. Write about whatever is in your heart, including any thoughts about your abortion. Take time to listen to Jesus. Write down what Jesus says to you.

Pray

Jesus, you are my Father's beloved Son and my brother. Thank you for leaving the glory of heaven to come into this world. During the three years of your public ministry, you revealed your Father's heart through your words and actions. You welcomed and loved everyone—even those rejected by others. This fills me with hope. Jesus, you don't want anyone to be afraid of coming to you. Thank you for accepting and loving me. I'm so grateful that you have invited me to have a personal relationship with you. I need you in my life.

Reflection Four

Jesus' Death on the Cross

Jesus Offers Me Forgiveness

Have you ever asked yourself why Jesus had to die on the cross? It is because we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (see Romans 3:10). When Jesus died on the cross, he took upon himself the punishment we deserved for our sins. And the precious blood that flowed from his wounds cleansed us from the guilt of those sins. By dying for us, Jesus opened the way to heaven. Now we can stand, pure and spotless, before our heavenly Father: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16).

Jesus, who is our Savior and Redeemer, willingly endured horrendous suffering because of his love for us:

- “They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand, knelt before him, and mocked him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head” (Matthew 27:28-30).

Jesus Offers Me Forgiveness

- “And carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side” (John 19:17-18).
- “Jesus cried with a loud voice, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last” (Matthew 27:46, 50).

Action

- Read about Jesus’ suffering and death in one of the Gospels: Matthew 27; Mark 14–15; Luke 23; or John 18–19.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you visualize the scene of Jesus hanging on the cross. What are some of the sights and sounds? How does this make you feel?
- Imagine Jesus’ precious blood flowing from the crown of thorns on his head and the nails in his hands and feet. Only his mother, a few women, and his disciple John are there to comfort him.
- Now put yourself at the foot of the cross. What are you saying to Jesus? Do you hear Jesus say, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34)? How does this make you feel?
- Journal about some of your thoughts and feelings.

Jesus’ death is not just something that happened two thousand years ago. It has meaning and significance for your life today.

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Jesus died so that all your sins—including your abortion—could be forgiven. However, to receive forgiveness, each of us must first repent of our sins. How do we repent? Repentance means to admit that what we did was wrong in God’s eyes, tell God we are sorry, and turn the direction of our lives toward him and away from sin.

But many ask—and maybe you have too—if aborting a child is wrong. Yes, it is. Abortion is a sin because it takes a new life. Life is a gift from God. All life is precious, from the moment of conception to natural death. When we do anything to harm

All life is precious, from the moment of conception to natural death.

or destroy life in the womb, God grieves because it is the loss of his son or daughter. If you have had one or more abortions (or were involved in an abortion in any

way), you need to acknowledge that it was wrong and ask God to forgive you.

These may be hard words to accept. Remember, since Jesus has died for all our sins, he has died for the sin of abortion as well. God is merciful. And the precious blood Jesus shed as he died on the cross washes you clean from the sin and guilt of your abortion. Let these Scripture verses assure and comfort you: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:7). “As far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12).

Do you ever think that the sin of abortion is too big for God to forgive? Satan wants you to believe that, but it’s a lie. You need to acknowledge that Satan “is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44). His lies can make a woman feel guilty, even after she has repented. Sometimes these lies can be so persuasive that a woman shuts down emotionally, even with those closest to her. If you find

Jesus Offers Me Forgiveness

this happening to you, say this prayer: “Jesus, in your name, I say no to these lies. Please cover me with your precious blood.”

If you have not previously repented for your abortion, do so now. Asking forgiveness is the doorway to receiving full peace and healing. So, don’t let anything hold you back from seeking God’s merciful forgiveness.

Action

- Kneel, and then look at a cross or imagine one in your mind. Pray, “Jesus, I ask you to forgive me for aborting the child I was carrying in my womb. I admit that it was wrong.” If you have had more than one abortion, ask specific forgiveness for each one.
- Continue by praying, “Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for my sin of abortion and all my other sins.”
- Remain quiet. Allow Jesus to speak to you.
- Listen as he says, “Your sins are forgiven.”
- Rejoice in God’s forgiveness. Thank him for sending his Son to die on the cross for you.
- You may also hear Jesus saying, “You need to forgive yourself for aborting your child.” Ask now for the courage and help to do that.
- Now go a step further: Ask yourself if there was anyone involved in any way with your abortion that you need to forgive—the child’s father, your parents, the healthcare provider, or a friend? Ask the Holy Spirit to bring their names to mind.

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- Forgiveness is not a feeling; it's a decision. So, don't wait for the feeling. It is often only through prayer and God's help over time that we can truly let go of the anger and resentment toward those who have hurt us.
- Now pray, "God, I am sorry for any unforgiveness, anger, or resentment I have felt toward (mention their names). I give them the gift of my forgiveness."
- We move through anger and resentment by offering the gift of forgiveness.

Jesus once said to the religious leaders, "I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). What a glorious thought to end this reflection!

Truths to Review

- On the cross, Jesus died for all my sins—including my abortion.
- My Father is merciful. When I ask him to, he forgives me. No sin that I have committed is too big for God to forgive.
- My Father asks me to forgive myself for aborting my child.
- Forgiveness is a decision, not a feeling. It is important to offer forgiveness to all those who have hurt or offended us.

Following Up

- Some women have never told anyone about their abortion or abortions—it’s their dark secret. It could be because of shame or because they’re afraid of people’s reactions and possible rejection. They don’t want any more pain in their lives. If that’s the case with you, ask the Holy Spirit to give you courage to open up to someone you can trust.
- If you are Catholic, make an appointment to go to confession. Talk to the priest about your abortion and receive the healing grace of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- You may want to contact **Support After Abortion** or one of the other support resources mentioned at the back of the booklet.
- Memorize: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16).
- Journal a prayer of gratitude to Jesus for his death on the cross for your sins. Take time to listen to Jesus. Write down what you hear.

Pray

Jesus, I’m so sorry for my abortion. Please forgive me. I don’t want to make excuses about why I did it; I want to receive your forgiveness. Jesus, thank you for dying such a horrific death on the cross so that my sins could be forgiven. Jesus, I deserved to die for my sins, but you took my place. Because of your cross,

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there is no separation between my Father and me. I can now look forward to spending my life with God here on earth and with sure hope for all eternity in heaven! You are my Redeemer, Savior, Lord, and Friend. Thank you, Jesus, for your great sacrificial love.

Reflection Five

Jesus' Resurrection from the Dead

Jesus Offers Me Healing

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. (John 20:1)

Death could not keep Jesus bound. He has won a glorious victory over death, sin, and Satan!

Action

- In your Bible, read the full story of Jesus' resurrection (see John 20:1-18).
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you recreate the scene of Mary's meeting with Jesus in your mind. His appearance was so different that she didn't recognize him until he said her name.
- Now put yourself into the scene. You have just met Jesus. What are your thoughts and feelings? What are you talking about with

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Jesus? Is he showing you the wounds in his hands and feet? Are you touching his glorified body?

- In your journal, record some of your thoughts and feelings about your meeting with Jesus. Include anything that Jesus said to you.

Jesus' resurrection isn't just something that happened two thousand years ago. It has significance for your life, here and now. The great news is that Jesus, now raised from the dead, invites you to participate in his new life.

Jesus' resurrection isn't just something that happened two thousand years ago. It has significance for your life, here and now.

The new life that Jesus offers you is one of hope, joy, and confidence in the truth that you are a beloved daughter of your Father. It is a life of victory over sin and over all the

things that weigh you down. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, you now have the power to say no to sin and temptations and yes to living a life pleasing to God. Jesus' new life offers you freedom from guilt, shame, anger, regret, or indifference associated with any wrongdoing, including your abortion.

These are the truths of our Christian faith. But should you experience any doubt about whether you have new life, Jesus is saying to you, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25-26). Jesus said these words just before he raised his dear friend, Lazarus, from the dead.

Action

- Read the story in your Bible about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead (see John 11). Underline any words that jump out at you or write them in your journal.
- Now draw a cross. Write any negative feelings related to your abortion on the cross (these might include guilt, shame, regret, indifference, anger, or bitterness).
- As you write each one, pray, “Jesus, I believe in you and the power of your death and resurrection. Please forgive me and free me.”
- Read this Scripture verse several times: “He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24).
- Imagine Jesus’ blood washing all your sins and negative emotions away. Now accept your freedom, and listen to Jesus say to you, “I came that [you] may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, you may recall that he shouted to Lazarus to come out of the tomb. Jesus then asked some of the startled crowd to unwrap the burial cloths that were wound around his body. Jesus didn’t want his friend to be bound any longer by anything having to do with death.

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He wanted Lazarus to be free to experience his new life abundantly. Jesus longs for you to share his new life abundantly too.

Healing Your Memories

Sometimes memories can keep us from experiencing the fullness of the new life that is rightfully ours because of Jesus' death and resurrection. Memories can be like chains. Perhaps this story will help you understand how controlling they can be:

An elephant trainer was showing a visitor around the zoo. The visitor noticed a large elephant with a chain around one ankle.

He wants to set you free by healing any shameful memories. "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Thin links staked the chain to the ground. "I'm curious," said the visitor. "How can such a chain hold such a large animal?" The trainer replied, "Well, it doesn't." He went on to explain: "When an elephant is born, we place a chain like this one around his ankle. No matter

how much the baby elephant pulls, he can't break the chain or pull out the stake. At some point, he stops trying. By the time he's fully grown, he's still chained. It's not the chain that holds him, though. It's the memory of the chain."

Jesus doesn't want the memories of your abortion to chain you. He wants to set you free by healing any shameful memories. "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

What does it mean that Jesus can heal our memories? When Jesus heals a memory, it no longer drags us back to the past. We can move forward in our life. This doesn't mean you will never have a memory of your abortion. You may even still occasionally experience pain, and you may still miss your child and regret

your part in his or her death. However, when Jesus heals you, you are no longer paralyzed by the pain or the condemnation.

Up until this reflection, the suggested action steps have been for you to do alone. However, for the actions outlined here, you may want to ask your pastor, priest, or a trusted friend to pray next to you. Their presence will be very comforting. Having emotional and prayer support can be particularly important if thinking about your abortion is overwhelming or traumatic. Jesus wants to heal your memories, and he will. But he also wants people to support you in your healing process. If you need additional support, please contact **Support After Abortion**. Additional resources are found at the back of this booklet.

If you support someone in this time of healing, help them through these action steps while you reassure them of Jesus' presence and love.

Action

- Begin by praying, "Jesus, I don't want to be chained any longer by memories of my abortion. Please come and heal me."
- Now ask the Holy Spirit to bring up any memories of your abortion: perhaps of the day you discovered you were pregnant; the reactions of the child's father or your parents; the feeling of abandonment; the dilemma of deciding to go to the abortion clinic; the actual procedure; the days following the abortion; or any other memories or flashbacks you find troubling.
- As a memory comes back to your mind, ask Jesus to come into the memory. Then wait

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and expect to see Jesus in your memory. What is Jesus doing? Is he reaching out his hands to you, hugging you, or maybe drying your tears? Say to Jesus, “Please heal this memory so that it no longer keeps me chained.”

- Finally, listen to what Jesus says to you. Perhaps he is saying, “I was there all the time with you. Receive my peace. I bore the pain of this memory when I died on the cross. I’m your risen Lord. I have healed your memory.”

Don’t rush. Let the tears flow. Crying is healing. “May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy” (Psalm 126:5).

And don’t worry if you can’t see Jesus in your mind or hear him say anything. Not everyone does. But trust that Jesus is with you. He sees you, and he hears the cries of your heart. Jesus is holding you and crying with you. He is feeling your distress and taking all your pain. Jesus is healing you.

Healing Your Grief

Are you grieving because of the loss of your child? Have you been estranged from someone because of your abortion? Although identifying and acknowledging your losses is painful, it is an important step toward healing your grief. Minimizing or denying your losses will only slow down the healing process.

Action

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify your losses. Then write them down.

Jesus Offers Me Healing

What is grief? Grief is a profound sadness, and it can be both painful and emotionally exhausting. It can leave a person feeling empty and numb. Grief is normal after a loss. So give yourself permission to grieve the loss or losses you've identified. Don't be afraid to feel the grief and the pain of your losses. Your grief is real. And your pain is real. But if you allow yourself to heal, the pain you are feeling now will diminish over time.

Action

- Talk to Jesus about your grief and your pain. Jesus is the Healer. He is listening, and he is with you. When you are ready, say, "Jesus, I give you my grief and my pain. Please take it all."

Allowing yourself to let go of the pain doesn't mean that you will forget your child or that your love for him or her will be any less. It is permitting yourself to accept the freedom and healing Jesus won for you by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. Accepting this freedom and healing will enable you to move on in the life your heavenly Father has for you. Remember: your Father loves you unconditionally, and he doesn't want you to suffer for your entire life because of what you did.

Action

- Quiet your mind, and focus on Jesus. Picture him alive and risen from the dead, walking out of the tomb! Know you are safe in Jesus' presence.

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- Pray, “Come, Jesus. Heal me, comfort me, and give me peace.” Then listen to Jesus speaking words of love and encouragement to you.
- If you are able, listen to some Christian music. Music may help you focus on Jesus’ presence with you. Keep praying, “Jesus, I love you. Jesus, I trust you.”

It is important to mention that Jesus can heal grief completely after one prayer session. However, healing is often a process—a very personal and individual one—and not a matter of following a series of steps. Be patient with yourself. Everyone moves through the grieving process differently, some more quickly than others. Some women can get stuck in their grief and don’t seem to move through it. You may have a memory that is still very distressful, or you may not be able to move through the grief of losing your child (or another relationship). If you find yourself struggling with grief (about your child or any loss) or feel stuck, it is vital for you to seek professional help. **Support After Abortion** will connect you with a local resource.

You are not alone. Other women struggle too. During this time, try not to entertain thoughts such as “I’m not healed because I lack faith” or “I must be doing something wrong.” Rather, ask Jesus every day to continue his healing. Also, seek the prayer, support, and guidance of your pastor, priest, or another person you can trust. And remain hopeful that Jesus is healing you.

Healing Your Shame

Have you experienced regret or embarrassment since your abortion? That you failed or fell short? If so, you are not alone in experiencing shame. God is your Father, and he wants to take away and heal your shame.

Action

- Spend some time in prayer with your eyes closed and ask God your Father to come in and heal the wound of shame in your heart. Identify the pain in your heart or wherever you feel it. Ask God to place his healing hand upon you and to come in and heal that pain. He wants to do this. You may want to repeat this prayer over multiple days as God your Father heals your wound.

Healing Your Body

Now let's focus on physical healing. In the Gospels, we meet a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years who came to Jesus for healing. She was desperate—no one had been able to heal her. So she pushed through the crowd to touch the hem of Jesus' cloak. Instantly she was healed. And Jesus knew that power had gone out of him (see Luke 8:43-48).

Jesus wants to heal our physical bodies as well as our memories and emotions. So,

Jesus wants to heal our physical bodies as well as our memories and emotions.

Support After Abortion

if you have experienced any injury, complications, or other physical side effects from your abortion, ask Jesus to guide you in making the appropriate appointments with a healthcare provider.

Action

- Turn to Jesus and pray, “Jesus, just like the woman in the Scriptures, I reach out my hand to touch the hem of your cloak. I ask for the healing power that flows from your cross and resurrection to flow through my body and to heal me of these physical conditions (name them).”

Remember: Jesus’ deepest desire for you—his sister—is to experience the fullness of life that is yours as a daughter of his Father. May your heart be filled with joy as you realize—either immediately or over time—that you have received healing. That’s the power of Jesus’ death and resurrection transforming your life!

Truths to Review

- Jesus’ resurrection offers me new life, freedom, and healing.
- I can have hope in my life because of Jesus’ resurrection.
- Jesus can heal all the effects of my abortion—spiritual, emotional, and physical.
- Jesus longs for me to experience the fullness of life that is mine as a daughter of my Father.

Following Up

- Ask for prayers for healing from your pastor, priest, or a trusted friend.
- If you are Catholic, receive the Eucharist whenever possible. Jesus' presence will be a source of further healing for you.
- Memorize: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25-26).
- Memorize: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24).
- Journal about today's time of healing prayer.

Pray

Jesus, you are the resurrection and the life. I'm so grateful for the new life that I have in you. For so long, I have suffered from the effects of my abortion. But today, I believe you have begun to heal me. At this difficult and painful time, reassure me of your love and your presence with me. Jesus, I praise you for what you have done and what you will continue to do in my life so that I can experience your new life abundantly. Jesus, you are my hope.

Note: If you have had more than one abortion, take time to bring all the circumstances of each abortion to prayer. You can do this over several prayer sessions. Jesus longs to heal you completely of the effects of each abortion.

Reflection Six

Jesus Sends His Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit Wants to Transform Me

Saying goodbye to a loved one can be a very painful experience—especially if we don't know when or if we will see them again. Jesus' disciples must have had heavy hearts as they walked with him to the mountain where he would ascend to his Father. Knowing their thoughts, Jesus gave his disciples a reassuring promise: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

Action

- Take a moment to hear Jesus say, "I am always with you."
- If you have any memories of people letting you down, lying to you, or not being there for you—especially regarding your abortion—take a few minutes to ask Jesus to forgive you for any anger or resentment you still feel. Then follow the steps in the previous reflection for the healing of memories. Jesus is your Healer.

The Holy Spirit Wants to Transform Me

Remember: Jesus has always been with you. And he will always be there for you. Call out his name with confidence whenever you feel alone.

Before his ascension, Jesus promised his disciples that he would send them his Holy Spirit (see John 14:15-31). Not knowing what to expect after Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples went back to the upper room in Jerusalem and locked the doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. There they waited. After ten days, the Holy Spirit came, with a loud rushing sound like a strong wind and tongues of fire that settled on each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2).

The Holy Spirit, who has loved you from all eternity, lives in you too. “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

And now the Holy Spirit wants to fill you—as he did Jesus’ disciples on the day of Pentecost—with the fire of his divine love. He wants to have a personal relationship with you—as intimate as you have with your heavenly Father and Jesus. “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you” (John 16:13-14).

Now the Holy Spirit wants to fill you—as he did Jesus’ disciples on the day of Pentecost—with the fire of his divine love.

Action

- Pray now with great expectancy: “Holy Spirit, come and baptize me with the fire of your love.”
- Don’t rush. Sit for five or ten minutes and allow the Holy Spirit to minister to you in whatever way he chooses. Perhaps you will experience a special sense of his presence. Maybe a word or thought you know is not your own, or a few words from a Scripture verse will pop into your head. Or perhaps you will see a picture in your mind. Whatever it is, it will be something very personal, just for you.
- Write about this time of prayer in your journal.

Being filled by the Holy Spirit transformed the disciples’ way of thinking and behaving. Do you remember how Peter immediately went from a fearful person who denied knowing Jesus at his arrest to being a self-declared disciple?

The Holy Spirit empowered the disciples to teach with boldness and clarity about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; to heal in the name of Jesus; to tirelessly travel to distant countries; and to suffer persecution and even death because of their love for Jesus. You can read all about these events in the Book of Acts.

The Holy Spirit wants to transform your thinking too. He wants to empower you to do things—perhaps related to your abortion—that you previously found impossible to do. Let these

The Holy Spirit Wants to Transform Me

words from St. Paul encourage you: “Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2).

What are some areas that the Holy Spirit wants to transform? Suppose you think about yourself as unlovable, as a failure, or as a disappointment to others. In that case, he will want to change your thinking so that you will see yourself as he does—as a beloved and cherished daughter of your heavenly Father. He may also want to change how you think about others who have hurt you, betrayed you, or let you down.

The Holy Spirit also wants to empower you to act. Perhaps he will inspire and give you the courage to share your abortion story.

Action

- Take some time to think about these or other areas of your life. Then pray, “Thank you, Holy Spirit, for being in my life. Come now and transform my thinking about (name the areas) and empower me to do (name the actions).”
- Quiet your mind. Remain in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Expect to receive an encouraging word or some thoughts about how to perform a particular action.
- In your journal, record what happened in your time with the Holy Spirit so that you can go back to it later.

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The Holy Spirit is so awesome—his power can transform some ways of thinking immediately. However, other thought patterns can take longer to change.

So continue to pray. Remember to watch out for the lies of Satan, who wants to keep you feeling unforgiven, unloved, insecure, or depressed. Always try to replace these lies with truth from Scripture. It is at times like these that the Scripture verses you are memorizing will be helpful. The word of God is an essential weapon for every Christian in the battle of our thoughts.

It is also helpful to share your struggles with someone else and ask them to pray with and for you. Bringing an area to light is another way to fight the lies in your thoughts. There is also awesome power in the name of Jesus. So, keep his name on your

Remember that your Father loves you unconditionally—actually, he is crazy about you!

lips. And remember that your Father loves you unconditionally—actually, he is crazy about you! He is merciful and faithful, and with him, nothing is impossible (see Mark 10:27).

One particular area that the Holy Spirit longs to transform is the negative thoughts a woman may have about the child she aborted. Many women have fears about where their child is, what he or she thinks about her, or whether they will ever be reunited with their child. These are normal thoughts. But the good news is that if you have any such fears, the Holy Spirit wants to replace them with these truths:

- Your child is a beloved son or daughter of God.
- Your child loves you, is praying for you, and wants you to forgive and love yourself.
- Your child has forgiven you for aborting him or her.

Action

- Read the previous truths. If possible, say them out loud so that you can hear yourself speaking them. Put a checkmark next to any that you find hard to believe.
- Now ask the Holy Spirit to assure you, deep within your heart, about any truth that causes you to doubt or to think, “I’m not sure about that.” Pray your own prayer, or say, “Holy Spirit, help me to believe that my child (name the truth).” In your journal, write down what you asked God. That way, you can go back later and give thanks for your new way of thinking.

Here’s one more thought about your child: why not choose a name for your child? Remember: you hope to be living with your child in the presence of the Lord for all of eternity.

A Memorial Moment: Some women have found it comforting to have a Memorial Moment dedicated to their child. At a meaningful place—a quiet garden, a beach, a scenic overlook, or beside a beautiful waterfall—she expresses her thoughts and words of love for her child and perhaps reads a poem, plays a favorite song, or chooses to lay flowers. These are such precious, intimate moments for a mother and her child.

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Action

- Think about what name you would like to give your child. You can do this over a few days or weeks. You could even chat with a trusted friend about your favorite names.
- Say to your child, “I am naming you _____!”
- Enjoy this time thinking about your child. Receive all the inner healing that the Holy Spirit is doing in your life right now. Remember: the Holy Spirit loves you and wants to fill you with his incredible transforming power.

Truths to Review

- Jesus promised that he is always with me.
- The Holy Spirit can empower me to do things I thought I could never do.
- The Holy Spirit can transform the thoughts I have about my child.
- With sure hope, I entrust my child to the loving care of the Lord.

Following Up

- Make a plan to begin learning more about Jesus’ disciples and other early Christians by reading the **Book of Acts** in your Bible. Perhaps you could read one chapter each day.

The Holy Spirit Wants to Transform Me

- Memorize: “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).
- Memorize: “Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2).
- Memorize: “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
- In your journal, write a letter to your child, starting with “Dear _____” (insert your chosen name). Many women have found this to be a very healing thing to do.
- Have a Memorial Moment to honor your child.

Pray

Holy Spirit, thank you for being in my life. Fill me with more and more of your love, peace, joy, and even laughter. Please come and completely renew how I think about my child, my life, and my future. When I have a negative thought or Satan feeds me a lie, I ask you to bring to mind a scriptural truth that I can repeat to myself. I want to begin living my days grounded in the truths of who my Father is and who I am as his beloved daughter.

Reflection Seven

Jesus' Second Coming

Jesus Offers Me Hope for My Life



Jesus will come again! Many people wonder about when this will be, but the truth is that no one knows. Only the Father, who has a great plan of salvation for all his beloved children, knows when his Son will return in glory.

We can, however, get a glimpse from the Book of Revelation of what it will be like when Jesus does come back to earth:

See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away. (Revelation 21:3-4)

And so, we wait in great hope for that day when Jesus will return in glory!

Jesus Offers Me Hope for My Life

Look at the salvation history timeline and find “You Are Here.” You are someplace in the period between the early Church and Jesus’ second coming. Whether you are alive when Jesus comes again or not, your Father’s intention is for you to spend eternity with his beloved Son, Jesus. For the Church—made up of all Christians—is Jesus’ beloved bride.

For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her, it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure. (Revelation 19:7-8)

And while we wait for Jesus’ return, our Father gives us the privilege of continuing Jesus’ mission—bringing God’s kingdom to earth. What a great calling! How do we do this? By listening to the Holy Spirit and doing what he asks of us so that we can bring Jesus’ love to others through our words and actions.

If you are thinking right now, “That call is impossible for me because I’ve had an abortion,” don’t let that thought go any further. It’s a lie. God can use everyone who has given their life to Jesus to spread his message of love and mercy. What St. Paul said of himself is also true of you:

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:-20)

So be filled with hope. Think back to when you chose to ask Jesus for forgiveness for your sins and invited him into your life. Whether it was the first time or when you recommitted yourself to him, these were such blessed moments! Think about them often.

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Action

- What has happened since you asked Jesus to come into your life or since you recommitted your life to him?
- What would you like to happen in your life? Record your thoughts and feelings in your journal.

The history of God’s children includes the stories of many people who, through the help of the Holy Spirit, turned away from sin and then helped bring God’s kingdom to earth. For example, there was King David, who committed both adultery and murder. He wrote the psalms, including Psalm 51 on repentance. There was Peter, who denied knowing Jesus three times. Jesus named him the “Rock,” and he became the first head of Jesus’ Church (see Mark 14:66-72 and Matthew 16:18). And of course, there was Paul, who persecuted the followers of Jesus until Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus (see Acts 9:1-22). He became a great apostle, tirelessly preaching the good news of Jesus throughout the ancient world.

Action

- Take some time to read about these people in your Bible. Their stories will fill you with the hope of what the power of the Holy Spirit can do in a person who says yes to God.
- But don’t stop there—the list goes on right up until today! Who are women you know personally or have heard about who have

experienced a personal conversion to Jesus? What are their strengths and talents? How are they using their God-given gifts to build the kingdom of God?

- You might ask other women for their suggestions.

St. Teresa of Calcutta, a nun who started homes all over the world for the poor and dying, often said, “Do something beautiful for God.” That’s an invitation for you, too.

It is possible for you to “do something beautiful for God.” You can start today. What do you think you could do? Could you talk to someone who is lonely? Or could you give an encouraging word, smile, or promise of prayer to someone having a hard day? It doesn’t have to be something big, but you can do it with great love.

Don’t let anything—including your abortion, feelings of unworthiness, or a lack of confidence—hold you back from doing something beautiful for God. Watch out for those fiery darts from Satan, who doesn’t want you to do anything good for another child of God. To combat Satan, you can shout from the rooftops, “I’m my Father’s beloved daughter!”

Action

- Think about some of the things that you are good at doing. How are you using these gifts? How could you use them?
- Now think big! What beautiful thing for God would you like to do?
- Share your thoughts with a friend.

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- Read 1 Corinthians 12. What spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit would you like to receive? Pray: “Holy Spirit, I ask you to give me the gift of (name it).”
- Journal some of your thoughts and any decisions you have made.

Remember: God, who has started a good work in you, will bring it to completion (see Philippians 1:6). This will come about as you begin to cooperate more and more with the Holy Spirit throughout your day. Like so many other areas, it’s a process—so take it one day at a time.

How can you begin to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and live for Jesus? The answer is to pray every day. Spending time with the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will change your life.

Spending time with the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will change your life.

And every morning, even before you get out of bed, pray, “Good morning, Holy Spirit. Please be with me throughout this day in all that I do, think, and speak. I want to please Jesus and my Father today.”

Jesus is our best example of someone who loved to pray! Jesus would slip away early in the morning to have a conversation with his Father (see Matthew 14:23). Then, renewed in the Holy Spirit’s strength and knowing his Father’s will, Jesus was empowered to meet all the needs of those who came to him.

It’s such a blessing to be able to walk and talk with God throughout our days. But sadly, many don’t know that this can be a reality for them. Instead, they live their days without hope. They don’t know that God loves them. They can’t break out of

some of their patterns of sin because they're unaware that they can receive the power to live a new life because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

And this is where you have an essential role to play. Jesus wants you to speak the truth to them. He longs for them to experience the love, joy, and peace that is now flowing out from you.

Every day as you walk in God's love, ask for opportunities to share some of the truths you have read about in this booklet, and maybe your abortion story. Also share what your loving Father has done for you. Through you, they could experience his forgiveness, healing, and hope. Wouldn't that be awesome? Pray especially that the Holy Spirit will bring to you women who have had abortions. You could be an answer to someone's prayer.

Every day as you walk in God's love, ask for opportunities to share with others the truths you have read about in this booklet.

And also, share what your loving Father has done for you.

Truths to Review

- Jesus will come again. As we wait for him, we can bring the kingdom of God to earth.
- By the power of the Holy Spirit, I can live every day for Jesus. Having a time of prayer every day is vitally important.
- Sharing with other women what God has done in my life could help them find forgiveness, healing, and hope.

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Following Up

- Decide on the best time in your day for a prayer time and reading of *The Word Among Us* daily devotional—perhaps early in the morning or during your lunch break. Share your decision with one other person.
- Memorize: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:19-20).
- Journal about what the Holy Spirit has shown you today through this reflection. Also, write about any resolutions you have made to help you move forward in your journey of faith.

Pray

Jesus, thank you for all the healing you have done in my life, especially while I've been praying through these reflections. Please fill me with more and more of your Holy Spirit so I can be used to bring the truth of your love to other women, including those who have had abortions. Remove any barriers that hold me back. Make me bold and courageous but also sensitive and compassionate. And Jesus, please help me never to forget that you are always with me and will never stop loving me. Father, I love being your daughter. Thank you for your unconditional love!

Start Your Support Here

Support After Abortion

844-289-HOPE (4673)

www.supportafterabortion.com

Project Rachel Ministry

888-456-HOPE (4673)

www.hopeafterabortion.org

Esperanza Posaborto:

888-456-HOPE (4673)

www.esperanzaposaborto.org

Rachel's Vineyard Ministry

Toll-Free retreat information: 877 HOPE 4 ME (877-467-3463)

www.rachelsvineyard.org

Lumina/Hope & Healing After Abortion

1-877-586-4621

www.postabortionhelp.org

Abortion Changes You

www.abortionchangesyou.com

AbAnon

www.AbAnon.org

Project Joseph

469-720-2273 (CARE)

www.healing@projectjosephdallas.org

Support After Abortion

SaveOne

615-347-8800

www.info@saveone.org

Surrendering the Secret

www.surrenderingthesecret.com

Deeper Still

865-524-3313

www.godeeperstill.org

The Word Among Us

800-775-9673

www.wau.org

National Agencies

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-8255

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

212-870-3400

www.aa.org

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

818-773-9999

www.na.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800-799-7233

www.thehotline.org

Start Your Support Here

National Human Trafficking Hotline

888-373-7888

Text 233733

www.humantraffickinghotline.org

Co-Dependents Anonymous

888-444-2359

www.coda.org

RAINN: Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network

800-656-4673

www.rainn.org

National Alliance on Mental Health

800-950-6264

www.nami.org

Grief Resource Network

828-726-9554

www.griefresourcenetwork.com

Grief Anonymous

www.griefanonymous.com

American Pregnancy Helpline – Miscarriages

866-942-6466

Crisis Text Line

Text 741741

www.crisistextline.org

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»» AFTER ABORTION

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SupportAfterAbortion.com/Virtual-Support-Groups

There Is Forgiveness, Healing, and Hope after Abortion

If you have been affected by an abortion experience, you are not alone. Inside these pages, you will rediscover your identity as God's beloved daughter, and you will receive the keys to finding freedom from the experiences and the emotions that you have been through. Take the first step today to experience God's forgiveness, healing, and hope.

Many great support agencies offer one-on-one, group, and online support and resources. If you want to speak to someone right now, please contact:

SUPPORT AFTER ABORTION

844-289-HOPE (4673) www.supportafterabortion.com

PROJECT RACHEL MINISTRY

888-456-HOPE (4673) www.hopeafterabortion.org

Esperanza Posaborto (Español)

888-456-HOPE (4673) www.esperanzaposaborto.org

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