

# Faith Story

Our schools are communities where an amazing range of activities take place: they are learning environments, places of service, social networks, administrative agencies for church and state and they are places where staff and students meet Christ, sometimes for the first time.

In the next few issues of *SchoolLink*, we will include stories of such encounters. If readers are aware of such stories in their own schools and believe that they might be shared with the readership of *SchoolLink*, please let us know at the LEA National Office.

Erica Bulman was a student at Cornerstone College at Mount Barker in South Australia. Her story is expressed in two parts: a year 12 devotion and a follow up five years later.

## Erica's faith story in 2000:

When I began my life at Cornerstone in Year 8, I'll admit that although I believed in God, my faith was not very strong. I used to dislike going to church and after coming from a public primary school, devotions took a bit of getting used to.

However, during my years at Cornerstone, my faith has changed as I have learnt many valuable lessons through devotions, and through being around so many Christians, students and teachers alike. Lessons as simple as putting myself in someone else's

shoes, treating others the way I would want to be treated, helping and listening to others and being open-minded about other people's views. Such lessons have taught me a great deal as I thought about them and acted on them.

This year has been particularly difficult and there have been many times when I felt as though God couldn't have cared less – it was hard to see the light. Yet I have accepted that when times are tough, God is always there for me and that through these times He can teach me the lessons of life. It was and is a

huge comfort for me to be able to pray.

Whilst I will always have many questions and things to sort out about my faith, the devotions, my friends, the teachers and the special presence of Jesus Christ at Cornerstone has played a large role in helping me find the truth and also peace and comfort within myself.

I believe this valuable knowledge given by God will provide me with stability and support as I take the first steps of my journey into the rest of my life.



Erica Bulman

## Erica's faith story in 2005:

It is hard to believe that nearly five years have passed since my testimony at my final Year 12 devotion. On that occasion I spoke of my life at Cornerstone College and how my faith had grown as a result of being a part of a Christian community. I learnt valuable lessons through devotions and through being around so many Christians, students and teachers alike. I neglected to mention in my testimony that my family was and continues to be responsible for helping me learn many valuable lessons in life: putting myself in someone else's shoes, treating others the way I would want to be treated, helping others and listening with an open mind.

At the end of year 12, I was confident that the valuable knowledge given by God, would provide me with stability and support as I took the first steps of the journey into the rest of my life. The lessons that I learnt and my faith have provided me with a quiet confidence and reassurance as I go

about my life now. In 2001, I was fortunate to gain entry into a Bachelor of Speech Pathology at Flinders University SA. I was relieved to feel that my hard work and prayers had paid off.

University life however brought a whole new dimension of experiences and challenges, new friends and independence. With independence came the need for a car, and to have a new car and a social life, one requires money. I started weekend shift work which took up most of my Saturdays and Sundays. I attended University during the week, babysat in the evenings, studied and enjoyed catching up and going out with friends. Although I wanted to, this new life made it difficult to find the time to attend church. It was different from the school environment where we attended everyday devotions and were supported in a Christian community.

Despite this new lifestyle though, I never doubted my faith in God. I may have had periods where I was too busy

or unable to attend church services, but I was always confident that God had a plan for me. I have always found great peace and comfort through prayer.

I believe my faith is evident as I go about everyday life and in providing service to others as a Speech Pathologist. I am not comfortable about preaching my faith, but prefer to act on the values that I have learnt as a Christian and provide service to those in need by living out those values.

I am currently working at a brain injury rehabilitation unit helping clients who have had accidents or strokes. I provide intervention to aid their speech, language, swallowing and cognition rehabilitation. I work with a large team of health professionals and I have involvement with clients and their families. I am always meeting people from all walks of life. I am very passionate about my job. It is satisfying to be of service to people, whether it is to help and provide professional assistance or simply to

understand them and to have empathy for their situation.

I continue to learn more about the world, myself and my faith as I experience life's challenges and I see that as a positive thing. Cornerstone College encouraged lifelong learning in a growing relationship with Christ. I guess I am still learning!

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