



Good evening.

Good to see you all. Nice and dry in the church here. Welcome to St. Monica's. It's a great pleasure to be here with you tonight and it is my great pleasure to welcome to St. Monica and to also our second night of our parish mission retreat. It's a treat to be able to welcome Julianne stands for over 20 years. She has held various positions within our Catholic church and shared her voice as a woman, as a mother, and as a faith built individual. Julianne stands is a nationally known speaker, retreat leader storyteller, and she has been the director of parish life and evangelization for the Diocese of Green Bay and a consultant to the U-S-C-C-B committee on Catechesis and evangelization. And currently she resides in the diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin. She's a wife, a mother, and a faith-filled seeker. And when she first shared at our parish mission in 2020, it was all on Zoom.

And I was very struck that I watched three nights of Zoom because the first night was so inspiring to me. Her inspiring stories, using everyday relatable things about her junk drawer, her family a vase, her conversations that brought insight and peace, they inspired me then. And I was reminded last night about the call that we all have to surrender to God and to be the mustard seed. So what a wonderful way for us to start our Lent, to have this opportunity to open our hearts and to hear what God is calling us to and is my great privilege to introduce Julianne spans.

Applause. Thank you so much. Welcome, welcome. Come in out of the deluge. There's an arc in here for you tonight. Thank you for coming. I thought maybe we'd have about 10 people tonight and we have a wonderful group. So hands up who was here last night. Wonderful, and hands up who is new tonight? Okay, so you did your homework, you brought people. That is wonderful. I was going to ask, I won't put anyone on the spot. Monsignor even did the homework and he brought a whole group too. He's back in there. I am chuckling to myself tonight because I actually have a slide on here called Pray for Rain. And I think that might be a mistake right now, but welcome. It is good to be here. Last night we just had a really great conversation and I think one of the best parts of the conversation for me was when you were sharing and asking questions at the end.

So I'm going to make sure that we have some time tonight to do that, but I also want to encourage that if you have a question to just raise your hand too at any point, parish missions are not lectures. I don't know why we think they are. This is not about a sage on a stage. It's about me being a guide on the side coming alongside you in your faith and lifting you up and encouraging you. Now last night we had some technical difficulties with the slides and there was a couple of images I wanted to share with you also because I told stories and my stories told stories. I forgot to tell you a few things. So one of the things I wanted to show you is where I grew up and oh, go the other way, here we go. So that's the village I grew up in and it looks like all cloud is mountains.

And so I grew up in a very small mountainous village in Ireland for those that are new tonight and my whole family is still there. My grandmother was the bell ringer in Ston of the church and she was a great character. She was about as tall as she was wide and she was, grandmas need to be squishy I think, right? And she had an apron, a penny, and she wore something called a housecoat. Did anyone remember house coats? The young people are like, forget it. No idea what you're talking about. House coats are these little dress type things that you put on over your clothes to keep your clothes nice. So they're like a little coat that goes on and you kind of do them and she'd always have candy in her pockets and everything. And two things that came to mind for me today when I was thinking about her. The first one is she had 67 grandchildren.

My mother was the youngest of 15 I think. Had to think about that there for a minute. And when we would go visit my grandmother, she would always take candy out of her pocket and everything. But when we would leave, she would make this gesture like this and she would mumble something under her breath and look at that gesture. It looks dismissive, like scram, get out of here. And with 67



grandchildren committing it in, you can understand that. But I learned later that she was saying things like pa, which is Gaelic for may God bless your work or which means may God bless you or may Christ bless you. Now, I wanted to share this with you. I wanted to share with you the traditional greeting of Ireland, which is Dia.

Can you say that with me? Yeah, don't be shy. This is not a shy parish mission, right? And Dia is very similar to di and it means God, God be with you. And it's the only way to say hello in Gaelic is to say, God be with you. There is no other way to say hello. And the response is a very interesting one. We say D. Okay, let's break that down. I saw a few little faces there. D which means God and Mary be with you because in our culture, when we honor God who is deepest within us, we must also honor his mother. And so we have this lovely balance in our culture of male and female coming together in our greetings. Very powerful. So I wanted to share that with you tonight. The other notable thing about my grandmother was I said she was the ringer of the bells of the church, the great big giant bells.

And she rang them every day. She rang them after her husband died. And we knew that my grandmother had passed away actually because the bells did not ring that day. So she was a neat lady. That's our parish church. Somebody asked me once after doing a talk, boy, what did your parents do? That's a really interesting house. And I said, no, that's actually our parish church. The funny thing is about the parish church, we never had the money to connect the tower to the main body of the church. So you have to come in and up this whining stairs and then when you need to receive the Eucharist, you come down the tower, go all the way outside, go around the church and go up the main aisle. And conveniently there's a pub opposite our church, which signaled halftime to the public who would put the pints of Guinness on when he would see people going, he knew they'd be over afterwards for a pipes.

So it was a lovely place I grew up in, and this is where I live now, very cold, frozen tundra, green Bay, Wisconsin, think 30 below. I wear goggles when I walk because if you leak some tears from your eye when you do that, they freeze your eyelashes together. I decided today I was going to move to California and then I Zillow the house prices and I was like, yep, no, but beautiful. And this was me actually going out on my morning walk, which is where God speaks to. So that little figure out there on the pier is me going out to the lighthouse in the morning. So I wanted to share that with you. Two moments from my life. Recently I retired, that's what I am calling it. I worked in diocesan ministry for 16 years, overseeing a couple of corporations and a couple of offices, and I worked about 60 hours a week.

I know not good and I worked hard and I worked long and I lost what I did. But my children were struggling and I was struggling. And so on January 8th this year, it was my first day staying home and I went to pick up my children from school, which I had not done before very regularly. This was my new life now. And this was my youngest son's face. When he saw it was me, he ran. It was very powerful. And then another memory from my life that I wanted to share is the time I met Pope Francis. So I mean it sounds very fancy. The time I met the Pope we're besties, but I gave an address at the Vatican. I represented the United States, which was really beautiful and had the opportunity to meet the Holy Father. And he asked me where I was from and I said, American, are you American?

And I said, well, yes and no. I said, I am an immigrant. And I came to the US and I got citizenship. But as an immigrant I said, and you know this, you always have one foot in two worlds, one foot in home when you go home, then you talk about home being over here. It's a peculiar thing. And so I told him home was Ireland and he did a big cheer and he had gone to school in Ireland, which I didn't realize. So it was a happy memory I wanted to share. Now our mission is about hope, right? Healing, openness, prayer and Eucharist, right? Those elements of healing, openness, prayer and Eucharist. And last night we talked about the famous Ko trees of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and I wanted to show you an image of the trees because the trees were decimated during that time with the aba.



And this is the image I promised to show you, which is an aho tree actually growing up through the roots of a temple and the Japanese. And this is what I forgot to tell you last night, call these trees the bearer of hope because of their resilience. So we're going to talk about being bearers of hope tonight, not just for each other here, but in order to go out into the world and feed what we talked about last night was a hungry, hungry world. May the hope of God fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. We don't keep hope to ourselves. We don't keep joy to ourselves. We don't keep our faith to ourselves. It's designed to be a seed to bring people to new life.

Someone said, what does that really mean? There's been times in my life when I have felt very far from God, not because I doubted that he didn't love me. I always knew he loved me, but I couldn't hear his voice or when I was going through such a tough time that the busyness or the distractions in life just overcame his voice for me. And I talked about last night, one of those times was when I buried my second child. That was one of those times when I really struggled to hear his small voice speaking to me. So let's talk about this today. There is universally two things that we don't talk about in the us. One of them is money, the other one is politics. We're going to talk a little bit about that right now. It's gotten very difficult, hasn't it, to have conversations.

You really can't talk about politics today, right? Well, maybe you can with people and people you trust, but if you have healthy differences with people, you should be able to talk about the things that make things work. But I've noticed in the last couple of years, our political life has gotten really wicked and unkind and cruel universally. It's hard to find good guys in politics and I mean good guys, of all the people ladies too, right? It seems like what's rewarded is snarkiness, character assassinations, rage baiting and flame wars. And our young adults are nodding. You see this every day. It's like the mud of our conversations has gotten so thick and during covid I think it got even worse. Do you remember those first couple of months during Covid when you were like, so how are we going to do Thanksgiving this year or Christmas?

And do we all think the same thing about what's happening? And are we making sure that everyone can be at the table or are some people sitting outside on their deck, eating their Thanksgiving dinner, looking at the other people who are inside, they can't be in the same? Do you remember those conversations and biting your tongue? I went back home to Ireland during that time. Our family has gone through a lot, a big family, my mom with 15 brothers and sisters, there's a lot of fighting, drinking life, death loss, it all is in there. And none of that divided our family like a small little germ.

My aunt and my cousin lived next door to each other and they would not talk to each other. They believed different things. And so we parted ways. Covid was a parting of the sea in some respects, but it also showed up what we prioritized and who we are. And do you remember those messages of let's do this. We're all in this together. Let's clap for our healthcare workers and our teachers. And as the pandemic went on and on and on, it was like, when is this going to be over? And so researchers have said that we actually cycle through a few different things. The first one is, and I'm not minimizing Covid, a good friend of mine lost her husband very, very young. And I'm sure many of you have been touched by that last two. But do you remember having that sense of fear of what is this? And I remember saying to my husband, I vote tribute Hunger Games reference off you go to the grocery store, your turn right? We were terrified. Could this thing fly at you outside walking on the beach alone? We didn't know. And as that fear gave way frustration set in, when are we going to get back to normal?

And then there was the fatigue where we were on zoom all day. It was go, go, go. And our teachers and our healthcare workers, nurse essential workers got fired. And researchers have said that it led to what's called floundering. Now we don't want to talk about covid. People say we're over that, but we have to because we have to be able to recognize the collective trauma that we all experienced over the last

couple of years. So what is floundering? Floundering is not depression and it's not anxiety. Depression can often be rooted with thoughts of the past or what's happened. Anxiety can be rooted in worry about the future. Floundering is about the present. It's a general sense of blah, blah, blah. And time becomes what we call amorphous. And you've experienced floundering trauma if you've ever done this. Was that the 2020 Thanksgiving that we all went here? No, no, no. That was the Thanksgiving of 21. Or do you remember that sense of time? Just all blended together and then we were off to the races. For many of us that went through that, we felt like we were floundering in our faith as well. And sometimes when we look at the church, it can seem like we're the same. It's the same. Where is the Catholic church going?

What are we doing as people of faith? What are we called to who's welcome? All of that on social media is very intense. So from this buggy muddy time of difficult conversations and floundering comes the opportunity for us to listen, to listen to the voice of God the Father. Now I want to set up this clip for you. It is a tiny sliver of a clip, but if you listen carefully, you'll hear all you need to hear. So this is a clip by a gentleman called Lois Lander. Has anyone seen this? Okay, that's really beautiful. He took this video when his baby was a few minutes old, okay? Her name is Portland. And so you're going to see, it's hard to see because you can see it's taken on a phone and all of a sudden she starts to cry and he calms her down. And I want you to listen to what he says to his daughter. So if I hit this button again, Mary thinking we'll try it. Okay, nope, nope. Going the other way this way. Nope. Isn't that powerful?

There's a couple of things stand out for me with this video, which is the first time she heard his voice and she was still the second time he touched her and he said, you are good. And then I love you. When we look at the Bible, one of the things that strikes me that always gets missed when we look at Genesis is this. And it was good. He created the heavens and it was good. He created the birds of the air and the fish of the sea and it was good. He created man and woman and it was good. You are good, you are good. And I had a priest friend of mine say to me, we say things like God is love and you are good, but we don't actually believe that about ourselves. We all have times in our life when we look in the mirror and we say, how did I end up here?

And also I know this because I have taught like this too. I'm a catastrophizer so it's bad, it's very bad. But we do this that we think that because we made this mistake or broke this relationship that we are a bad person and we carry that with us. We carry the voice of the person who told us when we were 14 or 15 that we would never amount to anything. That's what I was told when I was 14 by a teacher at school. I still hear that voice or the voice of the parent who yelled at us and said, you are nothing. The person who should have loved us, the most words wound. And we carry those with us as soul scars. And we just go about our lives and once in a while we take off the mask and we let God see us as we really are

Priests. Friend of mine said, if you had told me that when I became a priest that I would have spent my time telling people that God loves them, I would've told you you're crazy. But not only that, God loves them, but that they have to believe that they are worthy of his love. And he said the deepest question in many of our hearts is this one. If they all knew who I really was, would they still love me? The answer is yes and that God loves you not in spite of everything you've done. He loves you because you are his. And I said this on Sunday, but Lent isn't about eating less chocolate or not doing this or that because you think God will love you more. He already loves you. So we are here together and God is here and he says to you, you are good and I love you. So I want us to take a moment and we are going to look with the eyes of our hearts. We're going to gaze up at the image of Jesus on the cross and you are going to hear his voice tell you that he loves you, that you are good, that you are worthy, that you are his beloved child. So let's take a moment for this.

God, we come to you tonight hungry last night. We be thirsty tonight sometimes, God, we struggle to hear your voice, Lord, what is it that you would reveal to us now? What word do you have for each one of us who is sitting here in hope? What is it that you want to say to each one of us tonight? Did anybody



have a word that anyone want to be brave and say? He said this to me. Yes, to be patient. Thank you. Is there someone over here? Yes. He said to me, I embrace you. That's beautiful. Yes.

Say that nice and loud for me. Oh, it's beautiful. Oh goodness. I love that to be embraced, to be caressed, to be enveloped in God's love. That's really powerful. Okay, who else wants to say? So a word that God gave them tonight or phrase Yes. Rest. Be at peace. Be at peace. I feel like someone is, I said this last night, but I really feel it tonight. Someone was given a clear word, but they're terrified to say something. Don't be afraid. I believe that you love me. Thank you. One more. Let go like Elsa from frozen but more deeply. Yes.

Yeah. Do you want to say that nice and loud? That was very brave. I'm sorry. Thank you. Being brave. Okay. That's a word you can ask the Lord for a word for yourself. It's okay. We pray for other people all the time and sometimes we forget to give ourselves grace. I love this image. It's from an artist in the UK called Elizabeth Wang. Do you see the image of Jesus with his arms out? I remember listening to Sister Helen Pja a few years ago. Something she said to me has stayed with me and I think of this image when I think of this story. So she is the sister. I see someone going, who is this? I recognize the name but I'm not really sure. She is the sister that was immortalized in dead man walking, right? She was the sister who would visit those on death row.

And I actually had a little conversation with her after her talk because I was very inspired by her and I said, what's the hardest thing for you? And she said, one of the hardest things for me, she said, is when I have to go to the family of the killer after I've met with a killer, and she told me the story of a gentleman on death row and he had murdered three teenage girls in Texas. And then afterwards she had to go to the home of the family where the murder took place and minister to the family. And I remember somebody said to her, how can you do that? How can you give love to that person who did this terrible thing? And I said, I have to ask. I said, how do you do it? And she said, I have to remind myself. She said, when I look at the image of Jesus with his arms outstretched, it is big enough for the man that did that and to comfort the family on the other side. And I have to stand in the middle of that pain and I have to see the humanity in the one who has done great terror and violence and I have to understand the pain of the one who's been victimized.

That bridge may seem extreme, but we have to do that every day. Overlooked the person who cut us off in trafficked, overlook the person who hurts us. I mean that seems like an extreme story, but Christianity has lived in the small moments every day of trying to get better and to different and live different and love harder. And I think the world wants us to love a little bit less every day, meaning keep it to yourself, stay away. We love our little bubbles, right? Yes. Yeah. Might make right? Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's a great question. If mind is right and Jesus tells us eternity, when is our history going to culminate and love will win. I think love wins every day. I think love wins sitting right here. I think love wins Taking a chance on your friend who said there's a crazy Irish woman, she can be funny and she can make you cry, but you need to come tonight with me.

I need you to hear this. I know you're going through a hard time every time you sit and you look around and you trust and you hope, love wins. When we open our hearts more to people who make us uncomfortable or challenge us in our comfort, I think love wins. Our faith is not about keeping people comfortable, right? Our faith is about afflicting the comfortable and comforting the afflicted. Let me say that a different way. Our faith is about burdening the comfortable and comforting the burdened. So I think love wins in the small unnoticed moments and I think it's easy to look and say we've got terror unleashing the world and I think that's true. War is raging all over the world, but so are great acts of heroism and love. I think about nine 11 coming here after that and seeing the images of Father Michael Judge pulled out from the wreckage of the twin towers because he rushed in when other people left to be the presence of Jesus in a moment of terror or the firefighters who went in to save.



There's big feelings in this room with this. I can feel it. Love wins. Hate is loud. Love wins when you live out and plant seeds of hope, when you say to the cashier at the counter, you look beautiful. Thank you. When you look your server in the eye, when you say God bless you and you're not afraid to, when you sit with your kids in public and you pray and they're like Mom. And when we can bring our whole selves to church, not just the parts that we think are the holiest or the purest holiness is to be natural and it's to say to God, here I am. I'm a bit of a mess. I told you that story of blessing, the mess. Oh my gosh, I have some wild kids just told this story. Check your children's pockets when they go to church because we were in church one day and we can hear parishioners giggling and I knew we were the source of it and I did a great little lockdown to make sure nobody's underwear was tucked into their pants.

We were good on that level. I was like, no, we're good. I dunno what's going on here. I have three kids. But it kept happening, but it was intermittent and sporadic laughter and we are going up to receive the body and blood of Jesus and it's dark in church because it's the five 30 mass in the winter. And all of a sudden my daughter who is six at the time turns around and she has in it was after Halloween, hot pink glow in the dark vampire fangs and she had been turning around and smiling at everybody, the church. And she turned to me in the communion line and went, I want to receive Jesus.

Take those out. Love wins when we can bring our whole self to church, not just the pieces that we think are proper and appropriate. God wants all of our hearts, not just this tiny little piece. And I think nowhere do you see this in the Bible then with the woman at the well. Let this truth rest upon you that the first person that Jesus chose to reveal himself as the Messiah, as the Savior was to a sinful woman who was too ashamed to go to the well in the cool of the day. She went to the well in the heat of the day when it was hot, when no other woman would be there who would make fun of her. She was rejected. The Samaritan woman, the scripture tells he had to go to Samaria, he had to go through Samaria to get to her.

So the first place Jesus reveals, he's the Messiah, he's the Savior. It's not to the righteous, it's to the sinner. The one who thinks she's worthy to share a cup of water with him. This is what she says to him, sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water. She was thirsty and he says back to her, indeed the water I give them and I find this fascinating will be coming them a spring of water welling up eternal life. Now we talk a lot about the woman and her sin and all of that, but what we sometimes neglect is the small detail of where this encounter took place at the well. Now there's a double message here. The well is where that encounter took place, but Jesus says to her, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling off to eternal life. He's using well twice. He's trying to get our attention here and there's a reason for that. Hang on to that for a minute. So let's look at this clip here together. Have you seen the chosen? It's okay if you haven't, but let's see about the woman at the well when she meets Jesus.

What did you

Think I

So you

And person, you

Don't want good thing alone. You think it's impossible to do anything about our ancestors worship on this, but you, where am I supposed to go?

God And the time is coming. No,

Nothing.

The first one was

A few small details. It's a very sweet one. Well, okay, first of all, this story comes with a disclaimer. Please do not do this. Although I don't imagine that there's too many wells where you can actually get water in Santa Monica or am I wrong? Is there a spring with a well where people gather and lower their children into buckets? No. Okay. I was a child and there is a well in our village and my cousins thought it would be the best idea if they lowered me in the bucket to go into the well during one summer when the well was drying up to see what was in the bottom of the well. And so I got into the bucket one because I was short, still am and they lower me in. What were we thinking? And all I go down into the bucket and as we're going down the well, I am realizing the well has its own life.

There are creatures skittering around the well and the bucket goes in with a great squelch. And I am unceremoniously dumped in a mud pit at the bottom of the well. And I look up and there my cousins are laughing my dyad because laughter echoes down the well saying, what do you see? What do you see? And I am cold and wet and miserable, but when I look up at the bottom of the well, I can see light, but they cannot see me because they look down and they see darkness. When we are walking with people as Christians don't look down into someone's life and see darkness and rot and sin, encourage them to do what Jesus did, which is to look up and see the light. That's one of the messages I think he's trying to teach us at the well. And there's a small thing. What did she leave behind?

Those would be very expensive. It would be leaving behind your cell phone or your car today. So it's trying to teach us something that every time we meet Jesus, we leave something behind. So my question for you right at this moment is what do you want to leave behind? What do you want to leave behind right now in meeting Jesus. Someone's talking. Did I hear someone tell me what they want? Your words. Oh your worries. Okay. That's a great one. Leave behind some worries. What else would you like to leave behind? See a lot of head nos on that. You don't have to be specific here. You can be general. Yes. Pain attachments. We'll go here. Stress, guilt. Guilt. Tough one. Yes. From the past. Nos at us. Yes. Oh, you have to speak loud. You have a lovely low voice.

Your daily troubles, your daily duties. Yes. I'd like to leave that one myself actually. Yes, your spiritual scars which cut really deep to the heart and we all carry them. Yes. I want to let him know that I believed what he said. Confusion. Thank you. Regret a lack of clarity. Those are related here. Yes. Or you just stretching You were okay. Yes. Pride is a hard one. We never get rid of our pride. Totally. We have to work on it every single day, right? Because then we play God all the time. Yes. Do someone over. Yes. Fears. All those words that you shared are all words we share together. Who doesn't have spiritual scars or stress or worries or regret are the past. But at some point in your life you have to lay them down.

Lent is a great time to lay them down. And I want to share with you just a couple of things that might help with this. I'm skip this. Oh, which is to open your heart. We'll come back to that. This image of Jesus often comes to me because I find it so comforting. If his arms are wide enough to receive anything, he can handle our stress or our confusion or our worries or our doubt. The best way that I know how to do that is not actually to pray for rain right now, but to share this story about praise. Sometimes I feel like we pray and it's name Father, we rush through the prayers, but I'm talking like a prayer where you put your whole heart into it. We are like, Lord, here I am I a little bit of a mess, but I'm tired of carrying this pain and I thought I was good at prayer.

If you can say you're good at prayer because I put thought and time into prayer, that sounds terrible. It's so arrogant. But this is how we think sometimes. And I had a story once where I was sharing with someone, oh, this issue is driving me crazy, but I feel like all I'm doing is I'm out there and I'm just pulling up weeds and I'm bent over working so hard to make this work and it's not working. The ground is all hard and it's part and it's dry and pulling up weeds when it's like that is worse. Do you ever try weeds or garden when it's totally dry? And a friend of mine said, well, why don't you pray for rain?



And I realized that if I had prayed truly with my whole heart to God, he would've rained and the ground would've broken up and the weeds would've come out much easier. That's the kind of prayer we're talking about. So I want to do a prayer experience with you right now and we'll go back a little here and it's an open your heart prayer and then we're going to have time for some questions. So can I trust me a little bit on this one? I know you're a little comfy there now and you're like, when is she going to get done? Because I think there's a reception and we're almost there, but just get cozy. I'm going to ask that you just set aside anything that you might fidget with. So I'm a fidgeter, a prayerful fidgeter, but I'm just going to have you just and just trust me. This is really a beautiful way to pray. So I'm just going to have you close your eyes if you can or just look down, just have a focal point. Okay? I'm going to have you take a nice deep breath in through your nose and out through your mouth and that's deliberate in through your nose. Nice deep breathing out through your mouth and through your nose, out through your mouth. Nice deep breath. You can make a noise. Okay? Okay.

If you find your mind wandering, it's okay. Just bring it back, bring it back, bring it back. Now as you are breathing in, I want you to imagine that your heart is like a balloon and as you breathe in, it's getting really, really big and you exhale, your heart balloon is just getting smaller. Drop your shoulders. There you go. There's tension, your jaw, hips, knees, fingers that are tense, just rest. Inhale that big balloon, your heart is filling and exhale. Now I want you to imagine that as you're inhaling, you're inhaling the goodness and joy and peace you need right now.

All goodness, all joy. And as you're exhaling, exhale out stress and worries and confusion and anxiety and shame and guilt and anything that is tearing at your heart right now. Now I want you to imagine that there's a shimmering canopy of light and it's just coming down and it's moving. It's like a scar for like a ribbon, but it's bright and it's yellow and it's glittery and it's shining and Jesus is placing that over you right now. Now it's right now it's resting on your head, it's right on your head. It's light, but it's starting to feel warm.

Some of you are feeling different things right now. I can see it. Okay, so just let it rest. Now imagine that it's just starting to drain from your head to your shoulders and it's slowly working all the way down your body, resting at your hips all the way down to your toes and your feet where you're carrying all that stress. And just sit right now in this liquid healing golden light of peace and joy. Three deep breaths in and exhale and inhale and exhale. One more and exhale. And now just lift from your toes. You're imagining, but it's just starting to lift away this canopy of love. It's all the way it's coming up. Your spine, your chest, your shoulders. It's been lifted off but what remains is like glitter and it's everywhere on you. It's shimmering. It is God's love.

Three deep breaths in exhale. Inhale and let's do one more and open your eyes. We can't see God's love for us, but it is there and it shines and is luminescent because it was given to you in birth. And when you were cleansed in the waters of baptism, you were brought into this shimmering liquid light. And many of you're like, I am really tired right now. Did you feel that Some of you came in? I'm just going to tell you, there was one lady and one man and literally their shoulders are here. And I was like, okay, relax, breathe, breathe, breathe. This is how I felt like this. And it finally came down. Just relax. Two more things and then we're going to close up with some questions and answers. Okay, we'll come back to that. We prayed for rain. We'll come back to this one when we talk about give us this day our daily bread, which is food for the journey.

God comes to us, but the way he comes to us in the Eucharist is so very special, profound. And I wondered of all the ways that God could have come to us, why did he come like bread? Why not give us this day our daily chocolate, give us this day our daily wine or I don't know. And I realized something when I was baking bread with my son this day God is teaching us something in the bread. I mean yes, it's a universal truth that every culture shares bread, but why bread? Hands up anyone that makes bread.



Okay, so a few of you and not sourdough, which is all the rage right now, but like regular bread with yeast. Okay, so what do you do? You get the ingredients together. What are the ingredients in bread? Come on. Flour, yeast, water and salt. That's really it, right? You can add all your fancy little things, but it's basically those ingredients. And then when you've got everything together, what do you start doing? You start kneading the bread and is kneading like a little gentle process? No, I make bread on days. I have to drive my little traffic making bread, right? My husband's like, you had a good day at work, didn't you today? Stay out of the kitchen people, right? And then what do you do after the bread is ready?

Okay, I heard someone say you put in the oven, okay, I thought that rookie mistake, you let the bread rest because bread that is not rested will not rise and neither will you. Jesus is teaching us, give us this day our daily bread because his life models bread on good Friday, he was violently knit by the way of the world. Every pain that is in your heart was knit into his crucifixion. And then he entered into the silence of the tomb who was quiet and he rested and then he rose like bread. On the third day, Jesus is telling us in the very rhythm of his life, the rhythm of Lent.

He says, rest in me, my beloved child. So oh, one thing here, y'all need to stop what? The bread is not good for you foolishness. And if you're gluten free, I understand that. Okay. Jesus did not say I am the broccoli of life, nor did he say give us this day our daily kale. He said, Fred is life. Jesus is the bread of life. Bread is life. Something I saw on Twitter one day that made me laugh. So my prayer tomorrow night, I'm going to take you into this journey of bread through a very personal story in my life, A very personal story, going to lead you with a bit of a cliffhanger. Tonight I found a lump. I found a lump. A lump, and it was having a party with some other lumps. And lumps are not good in my family. My mother passed away, which was 54 from cancer and I learned something about bread in that. And tomorrow I'm going to share that with you. Bread of life. Questions, thoughts, comments? We've got a couple of minutes. Yes, gentlemen over here.

They're so young.

Oh no, it's a lot of me.

Anyhow, I heard you earlier mention how in those painful periods in your life, and you talked about 'em last night when someone asked you how did you become the person you did? And you mentioned through a lot of suffering. And tonight I heard you say that some of us may feel like God is, there's moments where we can feel God is not near, can't see him, can't hear it her, et cetera. What I'm going through something and I'm very angry and upset about it and I'm so wound up that I'm ready to pop and I can't see. And I pray every day and I contemplate every day and meditate with scripture and I can't hear Jesus' voice. So I'm curious what you do when you go through these, when you have these, what are some of your practices that you do to hear even that little exercise? Close your eyes. That's the great one. I didn't hear anything.

That's okay.

I heard it was so quiet and silent here. I can hear the rain outside. So yeah, thank you.

This is a great question. We all been there when we feel like we are just going to go through the roof, the first thing I would tell you is when I hear the word anger. Anger is a secondary emotion. It's not a primary emotion. Anger masks something else. Fear, sadness, pain. And that's what I said when we talked about God wants your entire heart. It's not just to bring your anger but to bring what is driving that and your pain. And that's the first thing I would say is the anger is the symptom. The root is something else. And I think if you're willing to sit with God and say, I am so mad because I am so sad because this has happened and then I remember going through a point in my life when something like this happened to me and I have a great prayer to teach you. It's 10 words because I know what it's like.



You get frustrated and you don't hear the voice and you sit here and other people are having amazing experiences where a couple of people actually had some really interesting experiences during that prayer, but we just did. I hope that you share that. By the way, this is the prayer. I can't and you insert whatever it is. I can't forgive this person. I can't get past this anger. I can't get beyond this sadness. I can't.

Jesus. You can show me the way. Might be nine words. I can't, but you can. Jesus. Show me the way. Sometimes that's the only thing you can do because you cannot get yourself over that. But he can and he will. It just is going to take some time. I can't, but you can. Jesus. Show me the way it's worth a choice. Great question. Question or two? I know I ran over and I apologize, especially with the rain. Okay. Oh, Mike, great. So we can hear the questions. Who else has a question that's rattling around tonight? Question. Questions? Yes. Gentleman over here. Kate is loud. Yeah. Yeah. A

Friend of mine this week had kind of an ugly incident just walking down the street and I was trying to comfort him in some way and I kind of tried to do a similar message, but it does feel like hate is winning, especially even factions in this church, not this parish. The message I hear, I hear when I'm hear is life-changing positive, but sometimes even on our own Catholic church, you open the newspaper, go online. Some bishops need some pretty neat things, some pretty closed minded things. So you work in the church. What are your thoughts on that?

Yeah, I think, and I work with all different kinds of people and we should work with and walk with different kinds of people. When I am in a place where there is no love, I am reminded by the words of a saint and I cannot remember which saint right now. It's just slipped my mind. But it's this expression, I think it's St. John Chris' system where there is no love, put love and then there will be love. And so when I am working with priests or bishops or regular people in parishes and there is animosity and disagreement is okay, people can have lots of different ways and opinions on things. But when I feel a spirit of unkind or cruel, a spirit that is mean and to people, I put love there.

So then there is love and love changes things. Sometimes it doesn't changes the atmosphere. I can't change a heart in that moment. Only God can. And I think there's a grace in that, right? We can't cure people, we cannot control people and we don't cause people to hate. My husband is an alcohol and addiction counselor. Those are his three C's. You are not the cause of this. You cannot control this and you cannot cure that. But what you can do is you can put your whole self in and you can bring love. And when you put love somewhere, then love grows because the Lord loaves and fishes is not just about fish and bread, it's about multiplying goodness. And sometimes when I hear negativity, it's a sign to me that people are afraid there isn't enough of God's love to go around, it's going to run out.

I even hear it with different speakers like, wow, why is that speaker getting to blah blah, blah? And it's like there's enough people to speak all over. There's enough words to say we have more than enough of everything we need. God's love is not stingy or mean. It is abundant and lavish. And so when I hear people try and diminish that love, it often comes from a place of fear like it's going to run out. God's love doesn't run out. We tire of asking God for love. And we think nobody is ever far away from God. No matter what you think or what you've done, God knows exactly where you are on your journey. And that is an incredible comfort to me. I think back to times when I was in college and I go, Lord, how did I get here? But he literally dragged me kicking and screaming through some stuff, right? So we're changing all the time and if it feels like you are far away and you can't hear God's voice, he's still with you on the journey. He's with you. He would never leave you. The most precious gift that we have are the gift of our children. And yet he gave us his only son gave us his only son. That's a great question the way tough one, tough one. Yes

It is. John the cross. What are you serious? Say that for everybody. This is super.

The imitators of Christ pamphlet that's in your pew on the other side, John of the cross.



st. monica catholic community

It's John of the cross. Yes,

Where there is no love, put love and you will draw out. Love goes on. Our love grows by sharing our love. So we want to put love into everything we do, all for the love of Jesus and all for the good of our neighbors.

I have a very short two minute video. Do you want to see it about love? Do you want to know what kind of a God we have is a father that never gives up? It's two minutes. I'll go back to it here. Oh, hang on. I think this is so powerful. I'm going to show this again, but oh, it's not going. It's going. It's not going. You're going to have to come tomorrow night. She wanted to try. You're like, oh cliffhanger. This one's good. America's going to fix it. And if he can't, it's a clip of the Armenian earthquake. So I need to warn you a little bit about this, but it's an incredible video of a father who searched for his son for 37 hours. Here it is,

Died parents, kids by yourself.

One brick. One brick at a time. It's pretty powerful. It's little search that's a love that never gives up as we all long for love. There's no greater love.

So

I will see you tomorrow night. We have gone way over time. I will hang about for questions and please be safe and I will see you for the last night of our parish mission and I will stop praying for rain. God bless. Thank you so much, Julianne.