

Her Story Part 3 - Mary Magdalene

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Sister Miriam James Heidland: Hello and welcome to the Abiding Together Podcast. Abiding Together is a place where you can find connection, rest and encouragement on your journey with Jesus Christ. My name is Sister Miriam James Heidland and every week I'm joined by two of my very dearest friends, Heather Khym and Michelle Benzinger. This podcast is born out of our friendship and all that the Lord is doing in our lives. You hear us laugh. You hear us cry. You hear us share very vulnerably, and you hear us talk about the things that we're still learning along the way. And you're most welcome to join us. You can find out all of our information on our podcast episodes on abidingtogether,podcast.com, but for now, grab a cup of coffee, settle in and welcome home.

Hello and welcome to this week's episode of the Abiding Together Podcast. We hope that you enjoyed our Lenten series on St. Elizabeth of the Trinity. And we hope that that was such a gift and a blessing to you because it is Easter now. And we're going to talk about something really beautiful. We're going to talk about the woman, Mary Magdalene, this wonderful woman who is called the apostle to the apostles. And we can't wait to just talk about her heart and just to ask her intercession and just to see what she wants to teach all of us. But first and foremost, Lent, Heather and Michelle, Lent is over. The days are past, it is time for Easter.

Heather Khym: Alleluia!

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Happy Easter!

Heather Khym: Happy Easter! Finally. Praise the Lord for the resurrection. Woo.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Amen. Bring on the jelly beans on Michelle.

Michelle Benzinger: Yeah, we'll see. I'm trying to be really good. But

Heather Khym: She is such a good girl.

Michelle Benzinger: But we will feast so let us feast. Cause we are in the Easter season. Happy resurrection. Here we go.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah. Happy resurrection. That's true. I was going for a walk the other day. And I noticed like, there's this little, I walk a lot in the cemetery, you know, and there's, it's all cement around the covering, you know, around like the walking space around the cemetery and, uh, peeking up through one of the cracks in the cement was a beautiful little flower, like some wild flowers. I'm like, Oh, you know, like that's hope springs eternal. Doesn't it.

Heather Khym: My husband Jake is about to plant wildflowers in our field next to all our bees. And I'm so excited about what it could be. I'm so, so excited.

Michelle Benzinger: Oh that'd be beautiful.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Michelle, are you planting yet? Is it time for you to plant.

Michelle Benzinger: I will be, I'm waiting just a little bit longer, but probably by this week, I just bought some new pots actually this weekend. And so I was like, Ooh, those are beautiful, and I stained some other ones, like whitewashed them. So they look more French, funky pot. So yeah. Bring on the flowers. You can't have too many flowers in your yard or around your house.

Heather Khym: I agree. Yeah.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Especially in early spring, you know?

Michelle Benzinger: Amen. Amen. Bring on the flowers, not the pollen. Here we go.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Oh, okay. So we're excited about this. We've been thinking about a series, you know, as we've done Deborah and Hannah, and today we're going to talk about Mary Magdalene and just this wonderful woman who, when we originally talked about doing this, we all decided we wanted to do a little bit more research. And I learned some new things about her as well. I mean, there's so much written about her and just the conflation of Mary Magdalene with the person. Where we first meet Mary Magdalene is in the gospel of Luke chapter eight. And I was just telling Heather and Michelle it was funny. Cause as I was looking through this, it was just really great. Cause chapter seven talks about the healing of the centurion's slave and where then Jesus raises the widow's son and then the messengers of John the Baptist and then the pardon of the sinful woman. And then right after that, we meet Mary Magdalene. It was just very nonchalant of how Luke says it. Chapter eight, he says afterward he journeyed from one town and village to another. I was like, of course he did like, yeah, why not?

Heather Khym: Yeah, no big deal. He just healed all these people performed all these miracles. He wandered over to another village.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: It's just so wonderful. It's great. And so we meet her there. So chapter eight, verse one and two, where it says so afterward he journeys from one town and village to another preaching and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. Accompanying him were the 12 and some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary called Magdalene from whom seven demons had gone, Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Susanna and many others who provided for them out of their resources. Which even those couple of verses, those three verses says a whole lot about a lot of things. But something that we know about Mary Magdalene and that's probably the most

famous thing about her in a certain sense is that she was somebody who had seven demons within her and that Jesus came and he expelled them. Like he came and he healed her of the sickness. And some, some say that the seven demons are synonymous with the seven capital sins. That she was a sinful woman. I mean, just, it's interesting what's said about her, but what we do know about her is that Christ came to her and he delivered her and radically changed her life. Like radically changed her life so much so that she now travels with the 12, what a chosen group of people. She travels with the 12 with some other women as well. And they provide for the disciples and for Christ and all the ministry out of their needs. So maybe Heather for you, what are some things that stick out to you right away? And we're going to talk about Mary Magdalene as the apostle of hope, but what do you, what do you notice right away?

Heather Khym: Yeah. I mean, you can't help but be drawn in by the tenderness of Jesus and that he's not afraid to talk to, to encounter, to heal like even the most lost, you know, that he really is living those, the scriptures that we hear in other places about I'm going to go after the lost sheep. I'm going to leave the 99. Like these are the moments where he does that in the hope that comes to that for us is that he will do that for us, that he is doing that for us. Or he has done that for us. And that we're never too far gone. That's what I hear in the story of Mary that is the most hopeful for me. You're never too far gone. Michelle, how about you?

Michelle Benzinger: I agree. And I love even how Pope Francis, we were researching her and he said he moved her feast day up to a feast day. Like she's an actual feast day in 2016 in the church calendar. And so like that he gave her recognition and it said that he put her on the same level with the apostles giving her her feast. And I just loved that. And I think she's a perfect example where, like you were saying Heather not only does he go after the one, he leaves the 99 to go after the one. He calls that one by name. He calls that one by this personal invitation and that he uses her as an example that he can redeem anything. And not only does he redeem anything, he encounters this personal relationship with her, like in scriptural accounts, like there's some church teaching or, you know, stories that Jesus appeared to his mother first, which I would like to believe because you better appear to your mama before you appear to everybody else, but in the scriptural account, it is he appears to Mary Magdalene first, you know, and that he would choose her. What a faithful, I mean, she's just a lover. What a faithful lover she is. Yeah. You know let's just dive deep into her story and her story with Jesus.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: I love this quote, Michelle, you found this beautiful quote that's on our quote list and from St. Therese of Lisieux, where she says most of all, I imitate the behavior of Mary Magdalene for her amazing, or rather loving audacity, which delighted the heart of Jesus and has cast it's spell upon mine. It is just so beautiful. And I think I, when I think of Mary Magdalene and I think of her story and just the. Just her beautiful heart. And I, I often think of in the passion of the Christ, I love the character of Mary Magdalene. Just this woman who so intensely loves. And this woman who as Pope Francis will call her an apostle of hope, of this restoration of her life. But I think so many of us and I, you know, all the three of us, just in our own journeys and also just hearing the stories of so many women and so many men who really suffer from, you know, how can God really forgive me or how can God really love me after everything I've done? Or how can God continue to invite me as a disciple? Like what good can I do because I've done all these bad things in my past? And, and sometimes we're held back by these places. And we think somehow the Lord relates to us

that way. Or as if he's saying, well, you've done these bad things, so I can't trust you anymore. Or you've done these bad things or you've, you know, you've made partnership with all kinds of stuff. And so you can't be trusted anymore. And so it's like we're stuck in this place. And I really was, what I see Mary Magdalene just coming forward and revealing to our hearts is this like the audacious, really the audacious restoration of Jesus Christ. Oh how He does not relate to us according to our sin and our brokenness. That is not how he sees us. He heals our sin. He heals our brokenness and he sees us according to the whole of who we truly are. So much so that well, like, we're going to talk about she's the first person that he appears to. It's because of her love, because she's in the garden, weeping, she's looking, she's looking for him and those who seek find, and she found him - the one whom her heart loves. It's just so glorious. I mean, there's just so much we could say about that, you know?

Heather Khym: Yeah. I was particularly struck by this part in the chosen series. And if people haven't seen it, I would recommend you just watch even just this episode. It's so incredibly beautiful and it's not, you know, like a factual account of everything that happened, but they're taking themes about who God is about his character and making it into these scenes of like what could have happened, what could have happened in so human and so real and so tangible. And in watching this story of Mary, like it, it shows her as a child and she's reading the scriptures with her father, you know, Isaiah 43, like I have redeemed you, I've called you by name. You are mine. And she's reading this all throughout her childhood. And then things go wayward. Her whole life goes wayward, you know, all of these things happen to her. And when she encounters Jesus, those are the words that he says, and he's letting her know - I'm the one who called you by name. Like, it's just so incredibly beautiful. And she hears these words like, and all of these memories come back to her, but he's calling her by name and her restoration in there is so incredibly beautiful. And I think we need things like that. And even just our reading of the scriptures to enter into what would it actually have been like for her. And as we go further into the story, what would it have been like for her to see, you know, Jesus die and to be weeping in the garden. And then to have him come and say, why are you crying? It's incredibly beautiful.

Michelle Benzinger: Not only but, why are you crying? She doesn't even recognize him. You know, she doesn't even recognize him. And I think one of the things like even Pope Francis called her the, you know, apostle of hope or disciple of hope. In that she allows the Lord to surprise her, like allows the Lord to bring wonder to her, allows the Lord to call her by name. And then she recognizes him in the garden. Like, I love that beautiful exchange and there's something powerful, like we even addressed it in the Elizabeth of the Trinity study, there's something so powerful about your name. Yeah, being named, it brings wholeness. It brings forth something, how we use our words and what we call things. Words matter and names matter and descriptions matter. And that we have a God that's so personal. And I love when she calls, he calls her by name Mary, and she says, Rabboni. You know, and I was thinking about that this morning, reading this to prepare for this podcast and how, like, what were the, you know, like Heather was saying, put yourself in the scene, what were the inflections of his voice? What was the tone of his voice? I'm sure there was a tone in the way he said it because there's something when you know someone personally, how they say your name. There's certain people I love the way they say my name or if I have a nickname, I love that they call me a certain name - there's something endearing about that. And so like, what was his inflections? And when he said her name, that her response was teacher. And I was reflecting on that this morning and this - because he taught her a new way to live. He taught

her how to live in fullness. And I was thinking that isn't it so fitting that he appeared to her the first one after the resurrection? Because she, he didn't just put a band-aid it on her heart. It wasn't just like a little band-aid. He restored her completely. He resurrected her life also. And her heart was shut down I'm sure enclosed and numb, like ours can be at times. And after her encounter with him and her restoration, she had a heart that was fully flesh, fully beating, and he taught her how to live a new way through his relationship with her. And that's just a powerful thing. That's what the Lord wants for all of us. Absolutely all of us. It's an invitation, not just for Mary Magdalene, it's an invitation for us all.

Heather Khym: It's true. We do get this impression though, that restoration and healing will only come when we get to heaven until then, you know? And there is some of that. That's definitely true. We've talked about this before, but when we read this story of Mary Magdalene, she didn't have to wait until heaven. It was her encounter with Jesus when that happened and occurred and she let it happen, you know, and then she embraced it and then she continued to follow him. And, and that teaches us a lot. The Lord is the same yesterday, today, forever. Like, it's not like suddenly now that we're not in scriptural times that he's going to withhold his restoration until we get to heaven. That he wants this for us now. There are certain parts of our hearts that yes, the fullness of it will only be when we get to heaven. But we can experience restoration now and he wants us to live in the power of his resurrection even now. Sister, what are your thoughts about that?

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Oh gosh. What you both are saying is just so true and this document, which comes from a speech that the Holy Father gave on May 17th, 2017. And when he's talking about Mary, as the apostle of hope, he says, Mary, the revolution of her life, the revolution destined to transform the existence of every man and every woman begins with a name - like what you're saying, Michelle - begins with a name that echoes in the garden of an empty tomb. He says how beautiful to think that the first appearance of the risen one took place in such a personal way, that there is someone who knows us, who sees our suffering and delusion, and who is moved by us and who would call us by name. Uh, and then he goes on to say, so that woman who was the first who encountered Jesus now has become an apostle of the new and greatest hope. I love that he draws out the personal nature of the appearance of like, and that's how Jesus comes to us. Like that's how we receive Christ. It's this appearance of him in our tombs over and over and over again. Where we don't recognize him. How many times has Jesus come and we think he's the gardener? We just don't even recognize him. He's coming like for a time such as this, he's coming now and he's coming in resurrection now in my life. And so, so often I miss him and he has to call my name. He has to call my name so I can hear him. And one of our dear friends that we have all been mutual friend of, one of our dear friends always says that, you know, when, when Mary Magdalene sees Jesus and she thinks he's the gardener. She's not wrong because he actually is the gardener. Like he is the bridegroom of the garden. He is the new Adam. Adam was a gardener and Jesus Christ is the new Adam. And he is the divine lover. He is the one who tills the soil. He's the, this is his home in the song of songs. Like this is the bridegroom coming to each one of us singing our name in a way that only we know, like it says in revelation that we'll have a new name only known to you. And it's just like, Oh gosh, it's so intimate. It's just so beautiful. And just so intimate of how the Lord knows us and sees us and literally calls us by name.

Michelle Benzinger: I love that one, probably one of my favorite books. And that's saying a lot is Madeline L'Angle's walking on water and she has this quote and it says our names are

part of our wholeness to be given a name as an act of intimacy, as powerful as any act of love. And she says, if naming can do all that christen us into new life and release new growth, is the opposite also true? Can allowing things to remain unnamed and unacknowledged hold life back? Naming is powerful when it comes to people, but it's also powerful when other things as well. And I think that is just what Mary Magdalene lives. She allowed the things to name the areas the Lord needed to restore and resurrect. And I just know for me in this Lenten season, and then now we're in the Easter season coming forth. And one of the things the Lord really has just put on my heart is to learn how to allow him to delight in me. And I thought I knew it. But no, I didn't. I knew how to be loved to a degree. I knew that I know in my head that he delights in me, but to really experience it in my heart and therefore return delight back to other people. You know what I'm thinking, but I can cheer people on, I'm a happy person, you know, all this kind of things, but to delight, Sister Miriam was actually informing me, is a term of intimacy. Like to really delight is an intimate area. And I was praying a few weeks ago and the Lord just like knocked me off my horse, whatever you want to say, but I was praying and just wrestling with the Lord about something. I just got the sense that he was saying to me in prayer. He said, you've allowed me to deliver you, but you haven't allowed me to delight in you. And I just fell apart and just started crying and weeping. And Lord just allow me, but there's something in me because of my story, because going back to childhood things, just the delight, there was a block there and allowing the Lord to resurrect that and allowing the Lord to teach me, become Rabboni, teach me a new way to live and allow the Lord to call me by name and call me into wholeness in those places, in those little places that needs to be delighted in. And so that is an invitation - like you were talking about Heather - on this side of heaven, I'm sure there'll be plenty more for Him to restore up there too. But you know, on this side of heaven, he wants me to learn how to delight, be delighted in and to delight in him in a deeper way.

Heather Khym: I think that's something good for all of us to sit with. Have we allowed ourselves to hear the voice of the Lord, call us by name? And especially as we hold closely within our memory and our hearts, the places where we are the most wayward, the places where we are the most broken, where we've sinned the most, where we feel the most shame? Like, are we able to hold that and say, Jesus, like, can I just hear your voice, call my name here? Because I think we block off these parts and we're like, well, Oh no, I can hear Jesus call my name now because like, I like go to church and I like serve on this committee and I'm like really trying to pray my rosary and stuff. So like, I can hear Him call me now, but that's not the kind of God that we have. Like he wants to go right into those, like the deepest places of our hearts. And he wants to be there. He wants to speak to us. He wants us to hear him right in those places. Like he doesn't shun those parts of us and welcome other parts. He welcomes the whole and he wants to make us whole, he wants to redeem all of it. And I think for many of us, we shut those parts off and we're like, okay, no, let's just like, sort of act like that didn't happen. Or like, I can't even go there. I want to act like that didn't happen because I'm so ashamed or whatever it might be. And I think the Lord is saying like, will you let me see all of you? Like, will you let the fig leaves come down because I want to love you there. That's exactly where I want to love you. And when I've had the courage to really let God into those places, like that's when it's been the most transformative for me. It's hard to be vulnerable in those places. It's so hard, so painful, you know, we can just be like, I don't want to go there. I don't want to take, I don't want to open this can of worms or I don't know where it's going to go. Where it goes, if we hold the hand of Christ, is it leads to redemption, it leads to restoration. Like we are an Easter people. This is the God that we have. Like, these

are the things that I think we have to hold the truth right in front of us, where we struggle with doubt and fear and shame. Like this is the, this is why he came. He's the Redeemer, he's the savior. And he wants to save each of us in a very personal way. So I think that's the invitation for us this Easter season.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Gosh, what you guys are, what you're both saying is so incredibly tender and intimate. And so vulnerable. And I'm, I'm thinking of what, as we, as we all listen to this, as this unfolds in each one of our hearts right now, each in its own individual way, you know what, if we're to be very honest, and if this is a season of resurrection, you know what, in our life needs to be named, what desires need to be named, what sin needs to be named, what sorrow needs to be named. You know, what part of us are we still exiling? Cause we don't want to see that little girl, that little boy. And I, I was reflecting recently, the Lord brought back a powerful memory that I hadn't thought about in a long time. And when I worked at this Catholic school in Seattle, we had a little boy for a couple of years who was just such a delightful little boy, but just so troubled. Just so troubled and his home life was a catastrophe and just such as just, Oh, bless his little heart. And when he would melt down that little boy would melt down, melt down and there was nothing anybody could do. He was inconsolable, he was violent sometimes, he was defiant. And sometimes what would happen, the only thing that could be done was that the principal, uh, she would come into the classroom. And what she would do is she would just kneel down and she would gently talk to him and she would just take him by the hand. And she would take him by the hand to spend the rest of the day with him. She would take him to recess. She would take him to her office. He would sit there, she would take him out to the playground and they would stand in the hall and greet the kids as they went by. And she was always hand in hand with him and sometimes he'd be crying, sometimes he would be okay, but the Lord brought that image back to my mind so powerfully lately, as I continue to journey through the little parts of my own heart that are alone, that are afraid that don't want to be named, that that are very tender and very, that I'm very ashamed of. And I just. Just had the image of Jesus saying can I just take your hand there? I don't want to fix you. I don't want to like, just let me, let me just hold your hand here. Would you, could you hold your own hand also? Like, could you just give yourself permission just to let, I just want to hold your hand. I'm just going to take you around today, all these little places thatm, just to hold your hand. And I wonder like, In our own hearts. Like what part of, if you're a woman, like part of that little girl inside needs Jesus just to come and hold her hand, or if you're a man, like what part of you inside needs that Jesus to come and hold the hand of that little boy inside So he's safe. So he knows that no matter what's happening, he's connected, he's in communion. It's okay. It's okay. It's like a safe place where things can be named and desires can be named and delight can be experienced because we're being held by the hand of the one who brings eternal communion.

Michelle Benzinger: Yeah, and I think that's such a beautiful, um, invitation. To name it, like to allow yourself to name it. And I think Heather, you alluded to it and Sister was just talking about - that there's something intimidating sometimes and there's something scary sometimes. And you're like, Oh, and you also were like, I don't want to just go digging up stuff because you also realize when you recognize it and name it. You have to honor it, but you have to grieve it. And I think we're afraid of grieving some things. Our really, like we had talked about previously on the podcast, is lamenting about some things, like really lament. And I love Henri Nouwen has a quote to pray is to grieve. And to honor that and to really

grieve. And I love it when I was just been reading and studying what lament means, and even deeper and Michael Card, beautiful songwriter and author, he says lament is the deepest, most costly demonstration of belief in God. Only someone who is fully awake and engaged in life can lament. Lament only comes from the lips of those who know hunger and thirst, the true terrain of the wilderness. Amen. And I think like Mary Magdalene was a perfect example. She was lamenting, where like with her whole body, with her whole soul, with her whole, where have you taken the one that I loved, you know. Like she lamented she, in her fullness, and she wasn't afraid of the pain. And she wasn't afraid. And I think we avoid pain because we know it hurts, but really the, you know, the avoiding is more painful than actually going through. We cannot get to resurrection without the death, but we wait in the Holy Saturday and we just want to park it and avoid it and deny that it's even happening. And so our whole lives are Holy Saturday on hold. Instead of resurrection Sunday with the resurrection life and the Lord is saying, come deeper. I've called you by name, and like Sister said, I will hold your hands and we will go through this to get to resurrection.

Heather Khym: Yeah. It's a powerful image to sit with, like where Jesus says, why are you crying? And I think that he asked each of us that - Heather, why are you crying? And, and not in a flippant way, but like, I think he wants to know. And I think that that would be a beautiful prayer time, like for each of us to enter into, even if you've done it before, to really place yourself in your imagination, in the garden. And to hear Jesus say to you personally, tell me why you're crying. Tell me, tell me all the things that you're crying about. Like to allow that lament that you're talking about, Michelle. Say this, this is why I'm crying. This is why this is all the pain Lord. This is all of it to just let it come out. And Jesus is also like, I want you to tell me because I'm the one who's going to wipe away your tears. Like I'm the one, I'm the promise. I'm the hope like I am everything that, that you need in these places that you have so many tears about. So I'm really excited about this Easter season. And I think it's, it's gotta be more than chocolate eggs, although so good. So good those many eggs, but it's gotta be more than that. You know, that the 50 days like that we enter into it and really allow ourselves to experience the resurrecting power of Jesus in our own lives.

Michelle Benzinger: Mm, and it's so interesting. We had a conversation with our teenage son last night, we were having dinner and some young adults were over and we were doing the Lectio for Sunday and he was saying something of he was talking about when he gets on the, um, dopamine trail. That's what he calls it. He's like when I want to get on the dopamine trail and like, just get, you know, he's so funny when he says, and. Our other son, Sam, our ninth grader, we were talking he said, so what's the deeper issue, you know, we were talking about it and he said, and so we had this conversation name the ache. What do you really want when you know? And he's like, I want connection. But like yes, name, the deeper thing I was. So I was like, boys, if you can learn how to name the ache. Yeah. It's going to save you a lot.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Oh, wow.

Michelle Benzinger: Like, what is the deeper thing? And, you know, and the Lord has just really been teaching me in deeper ways that even all of our sinfulness comes, the root cause is a place of woundedness. And, but even at the core is for a desire, like what does Bob say? What does Dr. Bob say Sister Miriam?

Sister Miriam James Heidland: So he says behind every disordered desire is a good and holy desire, right? The unnamed ache, right? The ache that's good. An unmet need and an unhealed wound.

Michelle Benzinger: Yes. And so for us, if we can name the ache and bring that to Jesus, then that also restores even our whole being, it brings us to wholeness, brings us to, you know, peace brings us to Shalom because we're dealing with the brokenness and the sinfulness of our life, both and go deeper in that. And I think also we can look at it with, you know, like, Oh, I don't want to go digging up stuff or we can approach it with Holy curiosity. What is this ache in my heart? It is an adventure with the Holy spirit what's going on in there. Why am I doing what I do approach ourselves as students of ourselves with Holy curiosity, you know, and see what the Lord reveals. Like he wants us to know the terrain of our hearts, like he knows the train of our hearts also.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: it's so true. Yeah. Oh, that's all so good. Yeah. Cause like what you're saying, because from that comes also like a hidden pattern of sin. Right. Which is the next step Bob talks about. And so yeah. Those places. So dear friends. Yeah. What needs to be named. What needs to be named, what ache needs to be named, what lament needs to be named and grieved. And I love Heather's invitation to us this week to really take those things into the garden and to let Jesus ask each one of us in all honesty. Why are you crying? Why are you crying? Cause there's a good reason why there's a good reason why? And I just wonder where for each one of us, where Jesus wants to take our hand and just to be with us and to bring us into communion. And to speak of his resurrection life to us, it's not around the cross is not underneath it. It's not pretending, it's through it. It's the only way is through the only way is through, and Jesus certainly goes through over and over and over again for us in every day in our life. Right. So, so, wow. Wow. Y'all. Yeah. It's interesting to see how these things unfold, isn't it right? Where the Holy spirit leads us. Cause, uh, Easter one things, Heather Khym. Easter, one things. What is your one thing my dear friend?

Heather Khym: Well, last week I was just. You know, Saturday morning browsing around worship songs on YouTube as I do. I just sometimes love to do that as I want to. Um, there was a new song that came out that I was like, Oh, so fun. Uh, the Dante one where he joyful, so cute, such a cute song. Anyway, I ended up coming across this song by Zach Williams. It's, uh, which I'm like, I'm not a country person. Um, it's not really my thing, but Zach Williams singing no longer slaves live from Harding prison. I have not seen that. I was like, why have I not seen this? But he's in a prison singing no longer slaves. And these prisoners just have their hands raised. And they're just praying these words. And I was like a wreck watching this. It was so powerful. And I was like, yeah, this is the power of Jesus. This is the healing power of Jesus. I thought just so perfect for the Easter season. I'm going to put it in the show notes. Zach Williams, no longer slaves live from Harding Prison. Michelle, what's your one thing?

Michelle Benzinger: My one thing is actually just Easter. You know, I love everything about Easter that brings about new life. It brings about springtime. I think it's a sign for spring time and things are like coming to life here in Florida and just being outside and just, I love nature. Like, I just love everything about it. I've been walking around and taking pictures of, in my neighborhood of all the different flowers that are blooming and all the different colors and the pops of color and yeah. Just the Technicolor of spring, I think is my one thing.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: The Technicolor of spring. That's very poetic.

Michelle Benzinger: Thank you Sister.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: My one thing is just a message of delight. I just want to give a shout out to everybody at St. Mary's parish in Mokena, Illinois. I had the delight of giving a parish mission there, which was quite unexpected and they're just wonderful, the priest and the staff there, but I want to give a special shout out to Melissa and also all the women. They have a women's group there, that's a moms group and there's about 25 moms and they get together and they listen to our podcast and then they have a women's group and they have tons of little kids running around. And so they invited me to lunch with them one of the days while I was there. And I absolutely enjoyed every second of it. Every single one of those women is so stunningly beautiful and just such a lovely creation of God. And it was, it was a pure delight for me to sit in their presence and chat with them and just to hear how their hearts have grown and, and really that's our heart for women, right. That they would come together and form small group communities. So I just wanted to, um, just to give them a shout out y'all are just so lovely. And thank you for welcoming me so deeply at my time at St. Mary's there, it was just a lovely joy. Absolutely loved it. So well friends happy Easter. And we just asked them Mary Magdalene would intercede for each one of us this week that she would speak her heart to us and her audacious love of the one who was risen that he may come and find us wherever we are and bring us into eternally arisen life. So until next week we will be Abiding Together. God bless y'all.

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