

## AT S9 E16 The Power of Play & Leisure Transcript

**Heather Khym:** Hello friends. This week's episode of the podcast is sponsored by reform a Christ centered functional medicine and holistic wellness practice reform, redefines health as the state of your body and soul reforms mission is to empower the whole person to find wellbeing in Christ and become the best versions of themselves physically, mentally, and spiritually through their unique faith based approach reform takes your symptoms as cues to address root causes of disease reform works with private clients, corporate teams, religious communities, and educational institutions from around.

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In the past year at Michelle, Sister Miriam, and I have all taken the class and are still benefiting from the fruits. Reform is for everyone because everyone is made for wholeness and holiness. If you want to rid yourself of physical and spiritual toxins, optimize nutrition and sleep, move your body in a way that supports you, learn to play and rest, and align your identity and health with God, it's time to reform.

You can find more information about reform on their website, [reformwellness.co](http://reformwellness.co), and on Instagram at [reformunderscorewellness](https://www.instagram.com/reformunderscorewellness) reform is offering a discount for all of our listeners for their upcoming may workshop. Mary and motherhood use the code abide 15 for your exclusive discount by April 30th. We hope you enjoy this episode. God bless you.

**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 [abidingtogetherpodcast.com](http://abidingtogetherpodcast.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. Welcome to Easter. Welcome to spring. Welcome to all beautiful things. Ladies, Heather, I do have to say I'm really proud of you that you got up super early this morning to record this thing.

**Heather Khym:** It was so hard to get out of my cozy little nest, but worth it. Good to see you both. How are you, Michelle?

**Michelle Benzinger:** Good. Heather was rocking the bed head this morning, but she looks great.

**Heather Khym:** so rocking it.

**Michelle Benzinger:** Yeah, she has that great curly hair. She was so funny. I was like, girl, rock it.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** She's literally like rubbing the sleep from her eyes to join us

**Michelle Benzinger:** literally. So, but we are so thankful that you made time for us, but I am good. I love spring. Spring is. Bring us up, you know, spring is so nice and so

**Heather Khym:** awesome. It is. Yeah. I've been like, so enjoying, like hearing the birds and seeing buds on the trees and up here, cherry blossoms, we have so many cherry blossoms, so they're all blooming and it's just like amazing. Yeah.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** I think there's always something so beautiful when you see the earth come back to life again. It does. Oh gosh. I was just in New York recently and they're just there. They're spring was just starting and the daffodils were coming up and the daffodils that weren't there on Monday when I was there, when it bloomed up by Friday when I left. Oh, I love that. Isn't that so nice. And so just, I went for a lot of walks in the neighborhood where I was, and just seeing the trees bloom. There's just something about that. You're like, okay, we're going to be okay. Yeah.

**Heather Khym:** It's hopeful. It really is like, like the winter was so dreary and so long, and then the spring starts to come and you're like, yes, it's a good reminder. Like on such a deep level, like the spring will come, like things will bloom, like in all the places that we feel like we're in desolation and winter, you know, that, that the Lord is going to do something new. So I love the spring.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Which I'm so glad we're talking about the topic that we're going to talk about. I don't think of all the episodes we've done. I don't think we've ever had one episode devoted to play and leisure, which is a great idea, Michelle. She's like, let's do that. I'm like, Ooh, let's do that. So we're going to talk about play and leisure. And before you think that you're adulting way too much, we want to invite you to something very deep in your heart and why. Play is the natural language of children in a way you know, there's so much to it. And there's so much that we love. So there's a wonderful quote that Michelle found first from Chesterton that he says, the true object of all human life is play. Earth is a task garden. Heaven is a playground. Which is so great on so many levels on so many theological levels and sociological levels and all kinds of stuff. And so all of us, we love to watch children play and we. Uh, one of my favorite things, working at a Catholic school for so many years, or even being at retreats where there's schools nearby is hearing children play. There's something about their laughter, their beauty, and it makes all of us as adults. I go, Oh gosh, I, you know, I wish we all have favorite memories playing. And so. We're going to dive into that, like the topic of play and leisure and what it is, and, and that, that call that all of us have in our life for that and why it never goes away. So, but what we want to do is before we jump into that, I, several years ago, I was working on a talk on the theology of sports. And maybe I've said this before in one of our podcasts, but I was reading a book by a former Olympic athlete of, of why play, like, why do we love sports? Like, there's a reason why we love it. And so he defined play as this and I. Can't remember who it was now, my bad. So it wasn't me. I'm not this isn't, I'm not the author of this definition, but I've used it ever since. And he defined, play as this, the recreation that brings us beyond ourself into joy. Okay. So I'm going to say that again. So the recreation that brings us beyond ourself into joy. And so even the word are recreation is the recreation. So it's not just one kind of play. And we're

going to talk about that, but what, what is that? That is recreating that is bringing us that is leading us beyond ourselves by our, beyond our own small world or our own worries into, into joy, into joy. So I think there's so much there even in that topic, but Michelle, for you, when you, this idea came to you, can you just share with our listeners a bit about it and what you've also been learning in your own life about play and leisure and all the Lord is doing.

**Michelle Benzinger:** Well, it's so funny that I'm not sure, like I really even shared with our listeners. Like publicly, not that I, not that I've been keeping anything from you, but I really entered in a season of rest. And like, I call it like a fallow season. It came after my personal retreat and I can actually put a link in the notes. I wrote a little thing on the blog, just explaining the whole process for it. So a lot of it had to do, we had Jackie Mulligan on the podcast about reform and there's like eight pillars of reform and one of them is play, but before that I just realized my husband is a really good player. Like he's really good and childlike. And he loves to play with our children. I am not, I am not like there is something, even when I am playing, like I'm thinking, okay, there's stuff that needs to be done. Like I'm always distracted. And so just diving deeper into my story and realizing that, how did I play? Asking yourself the questions like being really like, have a Holy curiosity about yourself. Like, what did I play as a child? And when did I play? Like what brings my heart to life and doing that. But I really considered that play was almost like a waste of time or like a luxury that I could not take. And I realized that in this season where I'm stepping back from a lot and really letting the land life fallow, it was a scripture the Lord gave me, it's like, kind of goes along with my word of the year, is that I do not rest well. And that I don't play well. And that those things go together. Play is a form of delight almost. And like there was a, um, quote that a good friend of mine sent me at the beginning of the season that I feel like the Lord has me in. And it's from a Sister. I think I may have mentioned on the podcast, but I can't remember it. God said to Sister Marie of the Trinity who is actually a Carmelite Sister, that Saint Therese of Lisieux formed. She was like her formatter while they were in the convent Together. And it says it's easier to find laborers to work than children to play. And I desire children. And I read that quote and it was like the Lord, the father spoke something to my heart because it goes back to delight. It goes back to allowing the father to delight in you and for you to delight in the father and just to become childlike, not childish, but to become childlike. And like what Sister was saying that earlier about play it's recreation is recreate. And so this is garden language. This is Genesis language. This is foundational language. And so it has been a journey for me to learn how to rest and play. I was telling a lot of our good friends that I stink at rest and play and a really good friend of mine. I have to even give her a shout out, Sarah Kismaric, a couple of weeks ago. And she and I were talking about this because the Lord has us on similar journeys. And she's like, you need to stop saying that you stink about it like that. You stink at rest and play. You need to say, I am relearning, reclaiming, and redeeming rest and play right now. Like I was like, okay, Lord. I am redeeming relearning. I am becoming childlike. And so, yeah, that's where I am. Heather, what about you? What are your thoughts on this?

**Heather Khym:** Yeah, I think it's such an important part of life and one that we underestimate, actually, we underestimate how important it is for us to have regular play in our life. How life-giving it is. I think when we get into modes of being productive, this just isn't on the list of something that is essential. You know, like I don't normally in my, when I'm calendaring or planning out go when am I going to play? You know, I just, I feel like I got a lot of stuff to do. I think this is how a lot of people are, but I think to Michelle, I have a very

similar story as you in the way that the things that happened in my childhood, it made life get very serious for me. And I came to this realization a few years ago. I was like, I stopped playing at some point. Cause I just, I had to grow up. I had to be responsible. I had to be really vigilant. And I had to take the weight of the world on my shoulders. I was taking care of a lot of people. And so play just seemed like I don't have time for that. Like I'm not a child anymore. And there was something that was stolen. The enemy literally stole play from me. And yeah. Yeah. Like the question that Jackie asked in reform, I thought was a great one is like, what did you use to love to do? And thinking back on that, I was like, Oh my gosh. Like, it was like, I was a different person. Like you're sort of looking back going, who is that person? And I think it's a, and it's an opportunity. If anybody, if this resonates with you, it's an opportunity of discovery. You know, like you get to rediscover, like you were saying, Michelle rediscover these parts of yourself that maybe the enemy has stolen certain things there, and that God wants to restore. And, and that's kind of exciting, you know, to go, okay, like what, what do I get to rediscover about myself? Because usually those things don't change all that much. And we do tell ourselves, well, I'm an adult now. So the childish things need to go away. But like you said, Michelle, it's not being childish, it's being childlike. And so how do we rediscover those things and implement them into our life as we are now? I think also when we play and when we rest, it is a sign of dependence and reliance on God, because you can't do that when your hands are full, when you got a tight grip on everything, when you feel like it's all up to you, you can't let go enough to actually enjoy yourself and relax. So I think there's a sign of like trust, surrender dependence that happens when we play. And when we rest, that is really, I think, a beautiful gift to ourselves and to the Lord. What about you Sister?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Oh gosh. Yes. I totally hear both of you and I, there have been many points in my life where I've been very convicted on, like, I have lost that art. I've lost the art of play. I have lost the art of just hanging out. You know, it just seems so often things have to have a reason why, like, why are we doing this? It has to have a reason why. And so I just, yeah, I've been many times been very convicted in that and I think. So often just how our lives are structured and how we've structured our lives and how play and joy and things like that. Those are very vulnerable things. Like you're saying, Heather, that, you know, if I'm always in control, then I'm not vulnerable. Like being played, like being swept away by something beautiful when you're playing or even losing track of time or just the, an unmitigated joy in something that's so delightful is so vulnerable. I think that children, you know, before they've been traumatized, but if they don't have any wants or needs, something like that, they just love to play like this, what they want to do. And they laugh with delight and they giggle and they cry and they fall down and they get back up and just, I mean, even psychologically what's happening in their minds as they're working through these things and we have to have in our lives. That allotment of the recreation that brings us beyond ourselves, into joy and otherwise it's even, you know, we, I think we've talked about this before of, of just even the way, like an instrument and instrument is tuned. Like when you tune a guitar, you have to let it rest before you can retune it. You keep turning up This. You know, the string, the string will pop at some point. And so even I think as adults in our society today of we have such a high value on productivity and I'm so busy. Cause if you're not busy, then you're like a loser or, you know, we, we do that to distract ourselves. And what, what do we do with an hour of empty time? Sometimes we don't even know. We don't know what to do. So I think this is something that's so important of all of us have had moments in life where we're, we've said, okay, I'm just going to take a walk. I'm going to go

outside. You go off, you, go outside and walk for an hour and let your brain work it out and let the fresh air come and feel that vibe, feel the sun on your face. You come back a little different person. And there's something about that. Or engaging in an art project or, you know, music or cooking or what, that's a beautiful thing. It's not just sports. It's. What, what brings you beyond yourself into joy of allowing the creative juices to come through our hearts and to bear something new bear new life in us that wasn't there before. Mm that's so good.

**Michelle Benzinger:** Yeah. And I think I love what you said about walking Sister, because it is the Saint Augustine and has a quote and there's that. I think it's a Latin part of it, but I'm not going to try to say the Latin. That will be Sister. Basically the quote is it is solved by walking is what Saint Augustine says, like getting out and walking, but isn't that garden language. Like they walked with him in the cool of the night Genesis. They spent time with him, they walked with them. They felt the earth. And I think for this idea of play like Heather, like you said, when did we stop? And why did we stop, like going back to parts of our story and that Holy curiosity. And I think for me, just even taking this as a discovery and like having a posture of Holy curiosity instead of, Oh my gosh, I need to play, like, if you do that in this one more stinking thing on your to-do list, you know, so it totally kills it. But, uh, we were even mentioning it. Like I was rewatching a class on reform. You're getting a lot of reform here right now, but, uh, our really good friend, father, Joe Fitzgerald, who is like Sister, like a really great athlete. He's a good friend of ours priest in New York. He actually was in the 96 Olympics. And in case y'all didn't know, Sister Miriam was like a division one athlete. Also. Like they're both just amazing athletes, but he taught on play. And he was talking about, it's like the language of the father and you all like father Joe is my husband's best friend. So I've known him forever. And he's such a gift as a priest, but the way he was saying it in authority and the invitation, he was saying it, I was like, with the father. And I realized that parts of my story not criticizing or judging my own earthly father, he did not play with us so that I did not experience that. And y'all, it makes me cry now. Like I, something in me just broke. With that, because then it goes back to like, Lord, why is this like touching this tender place in my heart? Because it is where an area where I have not allowed the Lord to where I have not delighted in the father in that area. And I'm not allowed him to delight in me, you know, to get to delight in me in that area. I have blocked that part. So I can't receive his delight. Like another way he wants to express his love to me is delight in me and play and. Going back to that quote. I was talking about Marie of the Trinity. I want to be a good soldier for him. I want to, you know, I want it, like, I am addicted to the drug of efficiency for the kingdom and the Lord's like, no, you're a child of the kingdom, you know? Yes. There's a part of us that we want to bring the kingdom to other people and yes, be a labor in the vineyard. But there's the foundational piece is to be a child that is delighted in by the father and to play and run in his arms. And so to ask myself and all of ourselves, those questions, how does the father delight in us as he plays, as we play with him?

**Heather Khym:** I think one of the ways to recover, play, like if this is something that's been damaged in your life or stolen away is to allow yourself to be a student. Like if you don't know how to do it, like allow yourself to be a student. And I, I love actually being a student. We were talking about this before we started recording. How all of us love to be a student? I love to be a student of my friends. I love to be a student of, yes, of course, all the wise people, but just the regular people in my life. I love to just like, listen and learn and sit at their feet and watch, you know, but I especially have. I've learned from my children. I've

learned about play for my children. My son, Judah is exceptional at playing. He is so playful, especially when something's not that fun. Like when we were moving into our house, that's not fun. Anybody who's moved- Just like this is the worst thing ever. Like people like moving, sorry. You're like, Oh my gosh, it's actually the worst thing ever. But that day he made everything fun. Like he just was like joyful and running around, making a game out of the most difficult. The things. And I looked at him with like, Aw, you know, I was like, how are you doing this? Like, I don't, it was just something that I wanted to learn from him or my little daughter Eve. I like walking through the store when she was four years old, just like skipping and singing and dancing. And I'm looking at her thinking. I don't know when the last time I had that heart disposition was, you know, where did that go? And I remember being 18 and driving with my mom in the car. And she's like, Heather, like when did you get so serious? She was like, lighten up. And I was like, not lighten up, like in a bad way. She was like, Where did it, where did it go? Like, why, why are you so serious? You know? And, and I just, in my mind, I was thinking, because life is serious. I mean, you know, like there's so many people that need to come to know the Lord. There's a broken world out there. There's this, like, I was just like, thinking life is serious, mom. I mean, get what the program here. But there's like so much in there that it, that is self-reliant, you know, it's somehow up to me to fix it. I think like when we allow ourselves to play in rest, it's really letting ourselves like acknowledged God, you are the savior. You are the King. Like you hold the world in your hands and I don't have to do it all all the time. So I I'm allowed to play. I'm allowed. It's actually something that you want for me. Like I'm allowed to rest. I'm allowed to let it go because it isn't actually all up to me. Like that's the, you know, trying to be the savior Jr. Michelle, like you've talked about before, like there's stuff in there. It might seem on the surface like, Oh yeah, I just don't do that. But when we deeply ponder. Why things are the way they are in our life. I think it exposes those places and praise God. He's all about restoration. He's all about a new way, a new life letting us have life to the full. So, so it's actually really exciting to be able to notice those parts and those deficiencies, because it's a pathway to new life. If we want it to be.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** Well and it's really great. Cause what you both are talking about is really, it's a great question. We could ask ourselves in the Lord this week is what is my story of play? You know, what is it? Some children were never allowed to play when they even a small children that was not allowed in the house. You know, some kids that wasn't acceptable or it was too loud, or it was too This, or it was to that, or, or yes, life became very serious and we had to be hypervigilant because there was so much trauma. And then hypervigilance is the thief of joy. You know, it really is. It's just will steal every amount of joy because we always have to look on the horizon for the next shoe to drop or the next bad thing to happen. Or where are we at? Like you're saying Heather with, to take control of this, or I have to watch over this and it does it just, all those things, just, just steal joy and perhaps it, and all of us have had there's a. There's a great movie. Bob Schutts uses that a lot in his Holy desire retreat, but it's an old Bruce Willis movie called the kid. And is it from like the year 2000 and you know, it is. Yeah. And, and it's, uh, the, you know, the story where Bruce Willis is this image consultant and, you know, he's, you know, he's so cool. He doesn't have any issues or anything like that. But then this little kid shows up in his life that he tries to get rid of until he realizes that it's himself and it's this little boy trying to get his attention and it's such a great Hollywood like rendition of inner healing. And there's a distinct moment in Bruce Willis, his life in the story where he, his dad shakes him. His dad shouts at him because he's afraid because his mother's dying and he says, stop crying, like grow up, grow up. And

he was eight years old and he, in the story like his character never cried again from that moment on. And it, perhaps all of us have had these moments where. We had these traumatic interruptions where it wasn't safe to play it. Wasn't safe to be vulnerable. It wasn't safe to let go, because if we did then something bad might happen. And I, I think this is such a wonderful time in the spring as we go into summer of really allowing the Lord. Like you're saying both of you so beautifully of just allowing the Lord to gently illumine these places where, where did where'd that little girl go or that little boy go. And where is it now? Where we're yeah, just the such cause Jesus, he just, Jesus is playful. He's beautiful. Got us so funny, you know, and I, we, you know, we love humor that God is very humorous and just the beauty of that and just the recreation like that. Cause that's really an, it's a foretaste of the term, the eternal rest. When, you know, we say in the Psalm 23, the Lord will make me lie down and rest beside restful waters. And I heard somebody say, one time, if you don't trust, you won't lay down. You won't. So it's like really, you know, synonymous of me allowing the Lord to allow me to lie down or allow me to play, or allow me to have, uh, unguarded moments of joy that really bring life to us because it's a foretaste of heaven.

**Michelle Benzinger:** And I think it's also the Lord. Like I love how you asked that Sister, what questions do we need to ask our heart? Because I think for me, I would have thought before, well, I play a little, or I do this, or I do that. And I realized I counterfeited play before in a lot of ways that it was more escape. And I think for that is escape and escape is basically hiding. Oh, that's a good word. And it's like just wanting to be childlike. I mean childish, like the hiding. I don't want to deal with something or whatever. And it's interesting. Um, my spiritual director always laughs because we were having this conversation about just like escape, you know, areas of hiding, you know, and he laughed. He was like, okay Michelle, we can't go off to Neverland because that's, you know, he didn't want to grow up where, like, that was his thing. But we were talking about it a couple of days ago and he was like, but you can enter into Narnia. You may not escape to Neverland, but you can enter into Narnia and become who you are because play is recreation and it's uncovering. It is unveiling who you are. It is discovering who you are, where escape is hiding, and basically covering up with fig leaves. And so where is the Lord asking us to, you know, Go through the wardrobe, like of Narnia and enter into play and enter into, and it makes us more human. You know, it makes us, it really actually makes us like we are made in God's image and likeness, and we are his reflections of glory, but it makes us like, I feel like we think that. That all has to be spiritual and actually we're incarnational beings. So it has to be human and emotional and all that kind of good stuff. And I was talking to different of ours, Dr. Christina McShane a couple of days ago. And she's like, we were talking about, you know, Jesus did go through the stages of development. He was human. Like we don't think he learned tasks. He learned like he was a child. He learned how to play and we feel like we're supposed to. We're made in his image. So we have to model him not only in our spirituality, but in our humanness and our everyday lives and how we live, which is so beautiful. And like, Heather, you said. It's becoming a student. We don't have to be experts. It's little by little that we do this.

**Heather Khym:** What are some ways that you guys play now as adults that have been really life-giving to you?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** I love to be outside. I just, I'm going to, I was looking at the window. I'm like, I want to go outside and play. I seriously, I love being, just getting outside and going for me, going for a walk. I mean, of course I'd love to play sports, but that, that. And right now is not part of my life, um, which is something, you know, like I offered to the

Lord, but for me, honestly, it is, I don't do well when I am just stuck inside all day. And especially sitting at my desk, I am an unhappy kid, stuck in air conditioning, sitting at my side. So I, for me, going outside is great and I love. Uh, we don't play games too often are kind of, but there's some other convents where they have like a lot of young sisters they'll play games. It's just fun. Like we sat at one time, just played this game for like two hours, just laughing. There's something about that of just laughing. And then yeah, for me getting outside is just really, really important. I know for myself. What about you Michelle?

**Michelle Benzinger:** For me? Yeah. I walk everyday, like to get outside to be near the water is a very big deal for me. Yeah. I'm not as good at playing games outside as I should be. My kids are always playing. Yeah. And so they're really, really good at it. So for me, it's like really relearning how to do that. But one of the big things that we've been doing is even as the weather gets nicer. Yeah. I color a lot like, which I just started doing that. You know, really literally weeks ago, it's just really starting to color or do watercolors again or artwork and nothing are not to produce just to, just to play, just to do it. And which has been really good for me. And I realized like, even when I was doing it, My mind, there's something about it just slows down and there's like all the scientific benefits of play, but there's something about it. I am one just to be outside is the vitamin D you know, it just does something to restore my soul, but all of that is just, yeah, very calming to me. And I'm starting to play like board games. Some of them. I like some of I'm not, I'll just figure it out. Yeah. Heather, what about you?

**Heather Khym:** Yeah. Um, art is a big one, something creative, like when I was in high school theater and art were like, the things that I took the most that were just so life-giving, and then that kind of stopped, you know, after high school. And I've realized in my adult life that there was times where I just didn't have any outlet for that. And when I've reintroduced it, I w I've been like, Oh, my gosh, like I have so much energy for this. Like, I might be tired with other things, but this is like, it's like filling my cups so dramatically. So I've realized that that's key for me is to have some kind of artistic thing in cooking. I feel like that's an artistic outlet for me. Like just in how you prepare the food and all the things that go into it.

**Michelle Benzinger:** Hey girl, bring that art over to my house because I don't get that.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** That's so you Heather in music and cooking, like that's so your love like, Oh, it's gorgeous to be holding you. Yep. Yeah. Sorry, Heather.

**Heather Khym:** Yeah. No, but just, just any, any kind of art, like I just love. Yeah. And all the kinds and my, my daughter, Eva, who's 14 is super artistic. So it's. It's fun to join her sometimes. And just like, let her teach me different ways that she's doing that. She's doing that. And like, my dogs are super fun for me. Like, I play a lot with the dogs and they are so cute. And there's just something about how they reveal God to me, like the playfulness and the cuteness, like the sweetness, like all of that. There's something very deeply spiritual about that experience. They lightened my heart. Like it's hard. It's like babies, you know, like it's hard to look at a little baby or a cute puppy and not have your heart melt. And, and that's a good experience for me. There's something that brings me back to something very original. That's been so life giving. So don't be surprised if I get a third dog just saying I'm already looking at mini golden doodles, like every other day.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** So there were, I was at a coffee shop recently, somebody brought in a baby or a puppy Golden retriever. And he was so cute and I just went up to him



and I, we all had to ask I'm like, can I just pet your dog? I just meant, I would just talk about joy, just brighten the dog jump. Tell him, be like, I'm so sorry. I'm like, no, it's, it's perfectly fine. Like, it's just so cute, you know?

**Heather Khym:** Oh, cute. Like at the end of a long day, I can be found sometimes sitting for 10 minutes, looking at Instagram reels of just puppies. Like I'm just like. This is just good for the soul.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** It is, uh, it is, that's the recreation that brings us beyond ourselves in a joy.

**Heather Khym:** Yeah. Yeah. And there's something that I think has to change within us to go. You're allowed, you're allowed time to play. You're allowed, in fact, you need it. You get to have it, you know, I think sometimes we can just think like, no, no, I have too much to do. Or like, I just, I just can't, I can't let myself do that. I think we just need to hear the father say I've given you permission to play, to take time each day to play

**Michelle Benzinger:** Heather. I think that's so important. I was teaching a class on making space for reform. And one of the things I said is I do you need permission? Like I give you permission, like write yourself a permission slip to make space, to do this, integrate this space. And there was something that just even saying that. The people will, like, I gave him an exhale and I think we need to do that because I think there's something about the inner critic that just says, Oh, this is a luxury or good for you. Good, nice. Over there. There's people that could play good for them. I'm in the real world. I got things to do, you know, that's my mind goes to, and so, but we're like, no, the father has given each of us permission to come in the garden and play with him and experience this delight and that, and that is good.

**Heather Khym:** Yeah. On a real practical level. I think we need to turn our phones off more often. Like I do think that that's a real thief, like a. Yeah, it steals away time, but we can get distracted by it. But it's also just that being inundated constantly with bad news. It's like we hear real time, a thousand bad things a day that are going on all around the world, or just being like constantly at, at people's mercy of when they want us or when we need to respond to them. And I think just taking time to turn it off, to go back to like, Yeah, just having space, giving yourself the space you're allowed to do that. You're allowed to turn off the phone and not be reachable for awhile to enter into the moment to be present to the beauty of the moment.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** That's so good. Yes. Yeah. And quite frankly, honestly, when we enter into recreation don't we return to our duties better. We return better. We return our hearts are more. Patient where we have more space mentally, we have more space physically. And so really all it does is it just blesses us. That's so true. That's the most important thing. Yeah. So whatever that is for you, dear friends, you know, we're not talking about escaping ourselves. We're talking about the real kind of play, the re the recreating soul feeding body feeding mind, feeding play, whether that's. Cooking for you. Is it gardening? Is it sports? Is it reading? Is it a good cup of coffee with a friend? Is it a long walk on the beach is whatever it's really endless. That's the beautiful thing, but what is the Lord inviting into your life today that will bring you beyond yourself into joy and just, and to bless your heart and to remind you the truth that no matter what happens in life, your deepest identity is that you are beloved son or daughter of God. Like that's just who you are and the father

delights in you. So. So, yeah. Any last words, dear friends, before we jump into our one things it's it's I love this topic.

**Michelle Benzinger:** It's so beautiful. no, I'll go first and just share about my one thing. Cause it kind of wraps it all up. The girls know this cause I told them the story, but when I decided to take just this, what I call my fallowing season, one of the things I put in my schedule is. I call them like creative dates with the Lord, you know? And it's just basically walking with the Lord and I just put it into my schedule as a block schedule, which was just huge for me. And like I said before, cause I feel like, Oh, that's just such a luxury, like whatever, but no, this was important. So I was going for a walk. And I'm in my neighborhood that I live in is beautiful. It is like almost like an historical district, but we have a lot of those libraries. Those free libraries are little houses and everyone's front. Yards. And we have tons of them all over our, um, place where I live. So I was walking one day and I was just like, okay, Lord, I'm going to be childlike and just pray like, Holy spirit, where do you want me to go? So I came across one of my favorite little free libraries and I was about to open it up. And I really just got that gut feeling. And my spirit, you know, where you feel like the Holy spirit is nudging. You like, like you don't hear his voice audibly, but you just get that gut. Nudge or instincts like this, isn't the library for you. Keep going. I have something for you. And so I was like, okay, I'm like, I'm going to just go on an adventure with the Holy spirit. Let's just see this. So I went to one then after another one, I felt like that wasn't, it went to one and it was one that was made for children. And it says that the front kids only, and it was right after I read that quote from Saint Maria the Trinity that I said before. And so I opened it up. And there was this beautiful book and then it would be my one thing. And it's by Karena Lukin called my heart. And it was this beautiful children's book illustrated beautifully, you know, cause art speaks to me, but it was all about the heart. And even in the back, it says tiny can grow and broken commence and a heart that is closed can still open again. And I took this book and I walked to the water that is also my neighborhood and, and sat on the little dock and read this book. About my heart and all the different pages. And I just started to cry and I was just sitting there praying and reading this book, and I felt like. I said to the father, a thank you. Like I just forgot how fun you could be, you know, and rediscovering wonder. And I felt like he was saying back to me, no, you forgot how fun you could be. You're discovering yourself. So, so I will post it as a beautiful book. It's a children's book, you know, kind of like CS Lewis. When you get older, you can start reading fairytales again, but it's called my heart. And so that is my one thing. So, Heather, what about you?

**Heather Khym:** That's awesome. Um, I've just been enjoying this new song by Dante Bowie called. How do you say his last name? I don't know.

**Michelle Benzinger:** You're asking me on name pronunciations.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** How do you say his name? I don't know. I'd have to look at it.

**Heather Khym:** I don't know, with Dante Bowie. Um, and it's called joyful. It's a new single that he released and it is just that, like, it's just a joyful little tune. I was like, this is so perfect for the spring. Um, so we'll post that. On our show notes, Sister, what's your one thing?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** I would love to know offer to our listeners, the movie, the kid, if you've never seen it, I would highly recommend it. And if you haven't seen it in a long time, see it again. And we actually, the priest on a recent priest retreat that we were giving with, um, Dr. Bob and myself, and, uh, they, that was their recreation one night is like 15

priests watched the kid. And I can't tell you how many, how many comments the next day about. Things they learned about themselves or what I, it was just so great. So that's a great family movie and I would just highly recommend it if you haven't seen it a long time, or if you've ever seen it, I've just check it out. So it's called the Kid one. Well dear friends, the Lord delights in you. And it is our prayer that, um, yeah, that he leads you to some spaces of recreation enjoying because he does, he loves you. And when he delights in you and he wants to sing over you. So until next week we will be Abiding Together. Happy play. God bless you.

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