

AT S8 E12 Advent Pt1 - Fiat

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:00:00] Hello, and welcome to season eight of 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 each and every week. I am joined by two of my very dearest friend, Heather Khym and Michelle Benzinger. This podcast is born out of our friendship and sharing all kinds of things together: our walk with Jesus, our insights, the lessons we are *still* learning, our joys, sorrows, tears, and laughter. And you are most welcome on the journey with us. You can find out more information about all of our episodes at 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 and happy Advent. Happy, happy, happy Advent. People are asking, are you guys going to do a book study? Are you going to do this? We've got something a little different for you. It's going to be about Our Lady, which we're going to let Michelle open up and just kind of break open for us. But before we start, what do you think about advent Michelle? What is your heart for advent this year as we dive into this brand new season? So happy new year! We always say that when we record this episode. Happy new year, happy grace, happy new liturgical year, happy new all things. So for Michelle, for you, how do you dive into advent? What are you looking forward to?

Michelle Benzinger: [00:01:32] Okay, well. Advent is probably my favorite liturgical season. Yeah. I just love it. Yeah. There's something about it.

Heather Khym: [00:01:38] No, it's my favorite

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:01:39] I thought it was football season.

Michelle Benzinger: [00:01:40] Well, yeah, that's not liturgical, but yeah, but football season is my favorite season, but it's not liturgical and so we can make it, I can make it anyway. I digress really quick on that, but, uh, I just love it. I love the preparation for just the coming of Jesus, the birth. There's something cozy about advent, but yet there's something just, that we're almost invited into wonder and the whole idea of the incarnation that Jesus loved us so much that he came and took human form. I think it's the best romance story ever, that he just came after us and wanted to be close to us. And he came in form of a human. So I love it. And we really were praying about the series and what we were going to do. And Mary just has become, so just to the forefront. And our prayer lives and especially mine, this fall, she's just become really more a maternal, where I've really embraced her as mother, more so than I probably ever have. And I've always had a devotion to Mary, but for some reason there's something that has been significantly shifted in that devotion where she has really become a tangible mother. And I think a lot of it has to do with the Lord has just been really healing, my maternity. And a lot of ways how I receive love, but how I give love as mother. And she has become, I often saw her as someone that is not relatable. And now I see her as someone that is beyond relatable, but not only relatable, but just too also nurturing and taking care of and just seeing the different aspects of who she is that she has just become really real to me and a mother in a way that I have not experienced before. And I said this on a previous podcast, but I really felt like the Holy Spirit was really just initiating us in this podcast to really just bring people underneath her mantle. You know, things are really crazy in the world, but

for such a time as this to bring Mary's children underneath her mantle of protection and maternal care and love. And so we are going to journey with Mary this Advent and I couldn't be more excited.

Heather Khym: [00:03:45] What do you love about Advent, Sister?

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:03:47] I love advent. It's one of my favorites too. I love the newness of it. It's the prettiness. And obviously we're preparing for Christmas, but there's something literally pregnant about the season that is tremendously beautiful. I love the advent wreath. I love the light in the darkness. I love that we, as the earth darkens the Northern hemisphere, he knows that as the earth darkens, the light of Christ shines, there's just such care that we take to prepare and make beautiful things. And it's, you know, it's just a special season. And I'm looking forward to it. When I saw the advent cards, which you guys made, Michelle, they're just so gorgeous. And I can't wait for our listeners to see that and to pick up a few sets of those because they're absolutely beautiful and it's really, I don't think there's anything better we could do, especially this advent season, this new year, then to spend that time with our lady and these four beautiful aspects of her heart and how she intercedes for us and how she teaches us as women. How to be women, how to be mothers, how to be wives, how to be sisters, how to be daughters. And she brings us to new places in our heart that we can't get to ourselves. She loves to reveal places where she wants to bring us to her son. And that's what she's about, that's all that she does. Just so we understand that: Mary always brings us to Jesus. That's just her beauty that she's always bringing us closer to her son. So I know for myself, Advent is such a special season. I love it myself and I look forward to it. What about you, Heather?

Heather Khym: [00:05:06] Yeah. I especially love the symbol of the light in the darkness and being able to meditate on that all throughout for a variety of ways. I mean, it is such a dark season, you know, there's just not as much sunlight and, all the little lights everywhere. As we prepare for Christmas, but the deep realization of how much we need Jesus to be a light in the darkness of the world and that he wants to be, and that he is, and he can be and the darkness will not overcome him. It will not overcome our hope. Yeah. I just feel like hope is a big theme for advent. It always is. But in particular, I think right now that this theme of hope, I want that to be more real, tangible, and increased in my own life. And that's what I'm opening my heart to in a particular way this advent. And I'm excited about this series. You know, I know for many people, they have hesitations around Mary. That it can easily be like I'm hesitating because I don't want this to, you know, there's the impression and many people sometimes give this impression that Mary is more important than Jesus and all of that, but that is not who she is. She's always just pointing to her son. The attention is never on her. So I think as we look to her, this advent, we can learn from her life as we do from the lives of the saints. And she was Holy. She was good. She was set apart for a purpose and there's things that we can learn from her that we can't learn from anyone else. And I feel like I'm still very much growing in my relationship with our lady, you know, there's times where I draw very close to her. And then there's times where I kind of forget. And then there's times where I draw close, you know? So it's been like over the years, I just feel this ebb and flow in my relationship with her. And my hope is that it just becomes more constant. And I think for all of us to just acknowledge yeah, that relationships take work, you know, and this is a relationship that I've definitely had to turn my attention to, but I'm also receiving so much fruit from it. I'm so incredibly inspired by her life. So I'm ready. Let's go. Let's do it.

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:07:03] Well, before we dive into the first episode about Mary's Fiat. Michelle, do you want to talk about the four aspects of Mary that you chose for this series?

Michelle Benzinger: [00:07:10] Yes. So we would love to talk about the four aspects. So the first one is going to be, Mary's Fiat this week. This first week is Mary's Fiat and her yes compared to Eve's no in the garden and trusting the Lord. And the second week is Mary's womb and it is going to be beautiful. Like how Mary nurtures us in her womb. And we based that on a beautiful quote from Venerable Fulton Sheen, how Mary's womb is a garden. And that how we really can grow there and how we need her maternal nurturing for us to mature in Christ. And the third week is going to be Mary's heart and really Mary as warrior mother, you know, like sometimes we think of her as timid. This woman is not timid. Like she crushes the head of Satan and a sword pierces her heart. So what are the areas that break our heart and what are the areas that Mary is interceding for us, you know, for her protection. And the fourth week we are going to be discussing Mary's mantle and just how she continues to protect us, but how she wraps us up in her mantle. And like Heather and sister both said, she always has leading us to Jesus. If you stop with Mary, then you need to keep going because she's always pointing us to Jesus, for Jesus to become real in our own personal life, for Jesus to become incarnational in our own personal spiritual lives. But I think one of the aspects we're really going to be focusing on and this journey of Mary is how Mary was fully possessed by the Holy spirit in a way like, I mean, she gave the permission to the Holy Spirit to do what ever you want, Holy Spirit. May it be done to me according to thy word. And that I think is what the Holy spirit is really highlighting for all of us. Now in this time of the church, are we people that allow the Holy spirit to have his way? You know, with no constraints, no boundaries, for it to be done according to his word in us and through us. And when we allow that yes to happen, that is how Jesus is incarnated into the world through us. And so just that aspect - is Mary is a spouse of the Holy Spirit. And to keep her in that framework to journey with. And she gave the Holy Spirit full permission, and we should look to her as the model to do the same.

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:09:23] And amen to that. And I mean, you went to all those aspects of her heart. And when we talk about today, we're going to talk about Mary's Fiat, which that word Fiat in Latin means. Let it be done. Let it be done. And so we read in the gospel of Luke that, you know, the angel appears to her and asks her, hail, highly favored one, you who are full of grace, which is absolutely beautiful. And she says, let it be done. Let it be done unto me, according to your word. And that reality in our life, which is very different than what Eve said in the garden. And so to speak. And so. When we talk about that there's a very famous quote by St. Irenaeus, which I know that many ministries use this, which is so beautiful and it's really powerful.

And Saint Irenaeus says this. He says, "It was that the knot of Eve's disobedience was loosed by the obedience of Mary. For what the Virgin Eve had bound fast through unbelief, this did the Virgin Mary set free through faith." So that when you think about that, the knot, the knot of Eve's disobedience, that was loosened by the obedience of Mary. And we've talked about before that the word obedience means to listen or to hear. So she's hearing and she's receiving, and she's responding to that. Which love always requires a response. And this is a great quote. Michelle that you found also from Edith Stein, which was so piercing when I first read it, because it's so darn true and she's talking to women and she's like, "none of us is completely free of this fierce tendency to grasp and control." She says, "Every woman has

something in herself, inherited from Eve and she must search for the way from Eve to Mary. There is a bit of defiance in each woman, which does not want to humble itself under any sovereignty. In each woman there is something of that desire that reaches for the forbidden fruit." Oh, I was like, Oh, let's just talk about that for a second because amen. Oh, ladies. Let's let's all be very honest right now. There is in every single one of us as a result from the fall. It manifests often differently in our lives. There are certain ways that manifests in women, but then it manifests in a particular way. But let's just have a very honest conversation about that because I can certainly see that in my own journey of wanting to grasp and control. Of like where we were like, don't tell me what to do. I'm going to do this. Or we, we use our feminine gifts to manipulate or to, Oh, all this kind of stuff. And I love that. She's saying that we have to find our way from Eve to Mary. So it's the restoration is the transformation of our feminine genius. We're not discarding it. We're actually allowing the Lord to transform it. And Mary shows us how to do that in the most beautiful way possible. So Heather, as you ponder both of those quotes, and as we journey here in Advent. What do those say to you?

Heather Khym: [00:11:58] Right now I just feel like I want to put like both my hands under my chin and just go tell me everything. It'd be like the whole, I feel like, gosh, there's some places in your heart. Like I've been journeying with the Lord since I was 14. And then you just go, whoa. I just feel like I'm at square one like in certain places. You know, I think this is like the story for all of us. If we're really honest, Michelle, you were bringing up that quote a few times in the last episode, like I'm prone to wander, and that has stuck out to me too. And there's this beautiful new song. That came out by Maverick city music. And there's one line in there that says, "I'm prone to wander and you're prone to chase." And I'm like, God, you need to chase me down in these areas. You know, where I still want to push back because I don't want to be controlled. That at points in my life where I was controlled or my freedom was taken away, and so I overcompensate by like trying to keep control of certain situations. And you see this beautiful disposition of our lady where she gives up all control, not knowing any of the answers. She just completely trust God, even though she was afraid, even though the circumstances didn't make sense. This beautiful, like outpouring of her yes is so inspiring to me because of the lack of control. That she was willing to let God do whatever he wanted to do and not control it and not feel like she had too. She just trusted, like, it's going to be, it's going to be good, what you have here for me. This is something that I can learn from. I've gone back to the garden, and I talk about this a lot. Like, as I speak for retreats and stuff. I think it's so important that we understand what happened in the garden. This is our story, and this exact thing is played out over and over and over again in our lives where the enemy whispers certain lies to us. We make an agreement with him and we go our own way, you know, we turn our face from God. We call into question whether he really is good, whether he's really going to provide, whether he's holding out on us or not. And yeah, this restoration of our hearts, what you're talking about, like the journey from Eve to our lady, from disobedience to obedience, from a lack of trust to trust, like, gosh, we need this so deeply in our hearts.

Michelle Benzinger: [00:14:12] Oh, amen. And I love it in scripture. It says, and the Lord keeps reminding me. It says, if you love me, you will obey my commandments. And so it's not a question. We don't have an obedience problem. We have a love problem. Like I says, if you love me, you will obey my commandments. But for me, it is where have I blocked his love to receive it fully? Because there was a power in Mary's receptivity. Like she trusted the

Lord in his character, but she also gave him full access to receive all that he had. And I think for me, like personally, like just really been praying about that in the last couple of weeks. Like where are there still blocks in my receptivity? My word of the year this past year has been romance, but where are there areas that are not, I have not allowed the Lord to love me fully? Where are the areas that are still dark, where are the areas in the corners and the nooks and crannies that I just, I mean, it's like a little kid playing hide and seek, you know. They're covering their eyes, you can't see me. And he sees all these parts, but I haven't invited him, he's such a gentleman, but I haven't invited him into those parts. It's not that he doesn't see them. I haven't asked them to come into those parts and he's just waiting for an invitation to love me in those parts. So I can experience his love in deeper ways. And I think one of the beautiful things about Mary is she holds our hand in that. Like, she holds our hand and says, it's okay, but you're like, what if it hurts? Like, what if I look at these areas or like you said Heather, no, I've given up control before, or it has been taken from me before, and this is what's happened, you know. Like I have been dominated and for us as women. We like, we've been dominated before. So like hell am I going to give somebody else control over me. But that is not the kind of control the Lord does. His control is life-giving control. His control is for our protection and for our well-being. He is a God that can be trusted, but we have seen personally all, each of us have in our own different ways, in our own different stories where we've given people control that weren't trustworthy, you know, and I think that is what the Holy spirit is trying to put his finger on saying, but you can trust me, just invite me in. You can trust me in this area.

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:16:25] And really the example that the gospels give us is Luke. Of an angel coming to Mary to ask permission - that he doesn't come to dominate her. He doesn't come as something overwhelming, like an earthquake. It's really like Elijah, the prophet Elijah, where the Lord, you know, it's not in the fire, it's not in the earthquake. It's not a strong, mighty wind. It's a still small voice. And the Lord sends an angel, an ambassador upon his behalf to make a glorious request. And I think we've said this before in our podcasts that Mary had the, of all people was fully free, so she wasn't dominated by fear, she wasn't dominated by people pleasing, she wasn't dominated by her own ego. So she of all women was perfectly free. Perfectly free. So she wasn't responding out of compulsion. She wasn't responding out of fear of being punished. She responded out of total freedom. And that, I mean that even, probably just thinking about those things, stirs up all kinds of things in our hearts where we say yes and we say no to things out of fear bonds not loved bonds. And that journey of her being invited and saying yes is something that she can bring us into. And I say this a couple of weeks ago on the podcast, one of my one things was that book living from the heart Jesus gave you, which is based on the life model. And I've been reading that every day and that I know the Lord spoke to me. He said, read this book again. You need to read this book again. And part of that talks about the healing of when we have fear bonds on our life. Fear bonds are developed out of avoidance of pain and they're developed out of fear. And so they drive us to do things to avoid pain, not to participate in true intimacy, but to avoid either somebody leaving us, avoid somebody abandoning us, to try to get our quote unquote, get our needs met in ways that so we can kind of satisfy those deep places. Versus love bonds. Love bonds are motivated by true intimacy, by gift, by self offering, by tenderness, by kindness, by truth. So in our life, all of us have areas of fear bonds. And so in the book they were speaking about how it's only when, and this is, it seems counterintuitive in certain aspects of our life. It's they are saying to us only when we, so only when we number one, surrender control. okay? Surrender control and we surrender our responsibility

that we have taken for other people's behavior and allow the Lord to come and speak to us in the little places. That's when our relationships begin to change. And I think I know for myself, wouldn't you know, we ask ourselves, if we even look at that quote from Edith Stein of where we grasp, where we dominate, where we control many times, I'm doing that in my life, because I'm afraid it's, it's dominated by a fear bond, or I'm afraid of somebody abandoning me. I'm afraid of being left out. I'm afraid of being whatever that is. And it's when I stop in those places. When Mary comes to me and she's bringing me from Eve to herself where I can sit with these little places that are very vulnerable and say, okay, what, why am I doing this? Like, Oh, this is this little girl inside who was afraid, who has suffered. Like you're saying, Heather, who has suffered in the past and is terribly afraid this will happen to her again, where she's made a vow that says I will never let this happen to me again. And here I am. All these years later, still living out that vow and Jesus is saying, I want to heal this fear bond into a love bond. So that you can surrender control and allow yourself to be free. So then I can love you here. That that is a small way of how these things work. It's the daily life where Mary is coming. Because she's a woman of the daily life. That's her life. She's the woman of the day to day and all the little things where she's coming in these places, especially in this season of advent to bring light into all these areas of darkness and fear.

Heather Khym: [00:19:53] I'm having a lot of thoughts right now. And I mean, I'm hesitating to go here because it's kind of a big topic and I don't want to derail from the intention of the conversation today. But I think that we can see this a lot in our society where for many women who are in public platforms, that you can see the grasp for control. And how it's looking more and more is a, we don't need men. Uh, men are sort of the enemy. And so if we can just do our own thing and women power and girl power, and let's get the woman tribe around and we can just do our own thing. And I think that there's something there. And it doesn't diminish ways that men have hurt women or women have hurt men because that happens too often. But the person of Jesus. Jesus, the man, our God also wants to restore that. That he is a man that we can trust. That he is a man who will not take advantage of us. That he is a man that does not want to, like you said, he, he invites, he doesn't dominate. That there's something there that if that resonates in your own heart, I think for us a women, we have to allow Jesus to come in to restore that. To invite him in, to restore these places where our control, or even like our strength is being rooted in a wound rather than in freedom. Ooh girl. Because yes, women are strong and yes, there are things that we need to take control of in our life, but not without God. You know, not on our own power. So yeah. I just think there's something there for many of us that we need to press into because you can see it happening throughout the world and there's yeah, it's a very strong, it's a very strong dynamic that's occurring, which I don't think is rooted in.

Michelle Benzinger: [00:21:40] Yeah. I don't think it's rooted in freedom, but if we're going to just go ahead and open this door, let's just open it all the way. You know, let, let's not just get a little crack here because this is advent in 2020, so we need to come on - bust it open. But so not only is it that looking at that for men, you know, like wherever that is stirring in our heart, Jesus is a man, but also really looking at the areas where we don't trust maternity. Where are the mother wounds in us? Where have we felt controlled by mothers? Where we've been controlled by other women? Where was the lap of a mother and embrace of the mother really unsafe for us? Where has like a maternal force, like someone in authority as another woman, where has that been unsafe for us? And what does true life-giving motherhood even look like? You know, we talked about in the Doctors series, what does

restored femininity look like? What does restored maternity look like in our lives? What does that look like? And sister, you were saying like what we said, we say yes to things out of fear instead of out of a love. I think for motherhood, a lot of us have put. The ones that whatever form of mother you take, whether it's spiritual or physical mothers, I especially saw this myself as a young mother, and I'm still working through this now, but the expectations I put on myself to what motherhood looked like, you know, I did not let the Holy Spirit define motherhood. I let other things define motherhood in my life. I need to be doing this, or I should-ed myself to death in those areas. And I just was trying to see like, okay, What does true maternity look like? What does life giving maternity look like? But where are my 'yes'es in my motherhood coming out of love and not fear or expectation? And to really sit, where are the areas that you have been hurt in maternity and allow the Holy spirit to come with this healing balm to restore those wounds also?

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:23:35] Yeah. Can we just stop right here? This, I feel like, this is one of those podcasts where people are going to literally stop it and either cry or rage or listen to it again, because what you both have brought forth are tremendously tender and vulnerable areas of people's hearts that we usually at all costs avoid thinking about. So can I, I just want to invite you just in kind of a space, if you can, just to, can we just stop for a second? Just allow the Holy spirit to speak to you. Okay. So I'm just, I'm just going to ask, Holy spirit, you who are the spouse of the Virgin Mary, you who is gentleness, your kindness. You are the love between the father and the son. And I just ask you Holy Spirit, that for each one of us right now, that you would bring us to the safe place of Mary's heart, her gentle, Fiat, her loving kindness. And if there's an, any area as women in our life where we have said we don't need men, or we have an aversion to men or a hatred to men or anything like that. I just ask you Holy spirit, that you would just bring that to the surface right now. Is there something in our life that we're avoiding or something in our life that's a deep area of pain that you wish to heal this advent? And Holy Spirit I just pray also that in the same way, any way our mothers have maybe wounded us or other women have wounded us and areas where we made agreements and areas where women are not safe or men are not safe. I just ask that you would bring that to the surface of our heart right now, as well, knowing that you love us, that you prepare this moment for all eternity. I'm just going to ask you my dear friends and maybe these are new places. Maybe the Holy spirit is illumined something new, or maybe this is something that you have been aware of for a long time. I'm just going to ask, would you just gently be able to show that to the Lord at this time and just see what the Lord wants to do with that? What Mary wishes to do with those two places they are known to the Lord. She knows them, and she loves you. I just pray for your peace mama. You're a queen of peace. Just to gently surround these places of our hearts. We just continue on this journey of even this podcast episode. Mom, I just want to ask that you would surround our hearts and give us the courage and the safety and the love to delve into these places with you, knowing that you wish to bring us to the heart of your son who loves us. We just thank you for what you're doing in this advent season. Even now, even now, give us the courage to let go of these areas of control and surrender them to you. Come Holy spirit, come and heal us.

I just wanted to take that little detour if that's okay.

Heather Khym: [00:26:26] No, I'm glad you. These are incredibly tender places. And you know, we are aware that there's a lot of men who listen to this podcast as well. And what was coming up as you're praying, like even just for the men who have experienced a failure in maternity or from women who they have felt emasculated by and dominated by. And just

how our lady wants to restore your image of women. And, you know, God gave us our lady as a gift, you know, like at the foot of the cross, he said to John, this is your mother. And that was for all of us. And there's a reason for that. And for some people listening to this podcast, you are getting triggered so bad right now. And my heart goes out to you because I know what that's like to be triggered by different things. And friends, like, all I would say is don't push away because you're being triggered or something is stirring up. Like these are the places where I do believe that God is putting his finger gently into a pain point because he wants to heal and restore. And he gives us people to heal and restore because we are relational. So he wants to give us himself in relationship in communion. This is why he gives us his body as we go to mass and why he wants to meet us in all of these tender places. But he also gave us the gift of another person. Who is our lady and not to dominate or control, not to take his place, not to hurt us, but to love us into deeper communion with God. To love us into deeper communion with her son, she wants to help remove the blocks between us and her son. It's a safe place. And I think some of us get triggered because this does not feel like a safe place. It feels like somehow it is standing in the way, our relationship with Mary is standing in the way or will stand in the way between us and God. Whereas she is just a conduit to bring us closer.

Michelle Benzinger: [00:28:15] I just been really meditating on Mary and just her life. And the Lord really brought it up to me. Why Mary was in the upper room at Pentecost. And I was sitting with this meditation. I was praying with this in adoration one day and I was like, Lord, why was Mary there? You know? And it just came and because the disciples were scared. Jesus had died. He had left and they were alone. The authorities were persecuting them and they were in this upper room and they were scared. And then the Holy spirit came in and she had already experienced the Holy Spirit because this is her spouse. So for her, it was like this beautiful greeting, this reuniting like, hello. You know, sweet friend, here you are. But Mary looked like Jesus. Like they probably have the same physical attributes. They have the same DNA. So how was it so comforting that they could see her fully respond to the Holy Spirit. A woman that looked like Jesus in physical form, because they share the same DNA. So they're like, it's okay to fully respond to the Holy Spirit also because Mary's doing it. If Mary's doing it, then we're okay. You know, and I think that's the invitation that the Holy spirit is putting his finger on for us right now. It's okay to go there. The comforter is here. He is coming. He's coming right now in this time and this season, this advent, Mary's here with you and she's here to be a mother to you in this. These aren't areas that you need to be scared of. These are areas that she wants to bring Christ into with you. You know, she wants to allow Christ to become incarnational in these areas. So you become more like him. And I think for us, like where is it just the simple, like the physical acts of you're listening to this podcast. Just the physical act of like opening your hands, allowing us not to be grasping, but just to open your hands open well and say, just come Holy Spirit. And Mary, mother me in these places, just come Holy Spirit and comfort me.

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:30:19] Oh and you're both are speaking, just so tenderly to these places and that's how healing occurs. That's exactly how healing occurs is the gentleness as the tenderness of these places, where Mary is desiring to do that, which you both are just speaking to, even in your voice, but in your hearts so deeply to every one of our listeners.

And you can just feel, I can just feel hearts opening. Even though there might be fear, but I like, feel hearts, opening, and really that's our invitation. That's our invitation is to even in a

small way, friends, like Father Jacques says little by little, little by little that we allow the Lord to breathe upon our hearts, that we would open our hearts, that we would let it be done. That we'd let it be done. And. Mary understands the struggle. She understands where we have fear bonds. She understands that. And. The Lord's in no hurry. He just, his heart is for us. He's always for our hearts. And so I just think it's very, I mean, I, you know, like we always say that these podcasts unfold in real time and we never know where they're quite going to go, but perhaps this is what the Holy spirit is leading all of us to at the beginning of this advent season of, of not just staying on the surface but in a way we've never done before, in a brand new year with new grace is to allow the Holy spirit to penetrate us to the depths and bring Christ to birth there in a new way.

Heather Khym: [00:31:41] Amen.

Michelle Benzinger: [00:31:41] Amen.

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:31:43] Well, before we jump into our one things, one thing I thought was really beautiful idea that Michelle had for each episode was to place each episode under the patronage of one of the titles of Mary, because there's so many really awesome ones. And so we wanted to just offer this particular one, this first one to you of this patronage of this whole episode and everything that we've talked about today and all that is stirring in your hearts to the title of Mary Undoer of knots. And you might have not heard of that devotion. I know I really hadn't heard of it until Pope Francis really spoke about it. I think I'd seen it someplace else. But Pope Francis is a huge devotee to the title of Mary Undoer of knots, which is actually a painting that was done in about the mid 1700s and by a German. An artist who took this from that quote that we read to you from St. Ireaneus, that Mary undoes the knot of Eve's disobedience. And so we'll put this painting in the show notes for you as well, but it's a Mary with a yarn, a piece of beautiful ribbon or a string, and she's undoing the knots, which is so great. And that's a powerful novena that you can do. And I love that because she does things, she's like a good mama. We've used this example before, when you have a knot in your jewelry or anything, we'll take it to your mom. And mom always has a way of undoing it. And so she has a way of undoing things in our life that we cannot do for ourselves. So there's a something, a special, or part of your heart or part of a relationship or something like that that just seems to be like in a way that there's no way forward. I would highly entrust that part of your heart and that part of your life to our lady Undoer of knots and ask her to undo that knot and ask her to undo the knots in your own heart. We can't heal ourselves. And so opening our hearts to that, but that is just a power. She's a powerful, powerful protectress there. And I love how that novena never fails. I tell you, and maybe it's not in a way that I think it should be done, but that never fails of her undoing the knots in our life and undoing the knots of fear and all the things that we're all like we've said before, kind of naughty. And so she loves to undo the knots there, but

Michelle Benzinger: [00:33:34] That was good little pun there - naughty...

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:33:36] See what I did there? It's great. All right. Well, friends diving in more deeper into the deep end. Uh, what about our one things for the week since I'm just going to start? How about that? So you go, speaking of something, I love Father Jacques Philipe. I'm a huge Father Jacques Philipe. And I came across two books. He's recently released, which are really small and they're not the same as some of his previous stuff, but he's taken some aspects of his books on prayer and books on peace. And he's put

like they're called nine days. So the first one is nine days to welcome peace and nine days to rekindle the joy of prayer. Right. And it's just nine small reflections, they're pithy. He's got some stuff that he's done before, but it's not like searching for and maintaining peace. And they're just great books to either just spend some time this advent season working on these areas of peace and rekindling the joy of prayer, or maybe giving to a friend. They're not overwhelming. They're very inviting. So just really great little treasures that are just very simple. So I would just like to recommend both of those books to you, uh, nine days to welcome peace and then nine days to rekindle or rediscover the joy of prayer by Father Jacques Philippe. I think you'll like them a lot. They're quite lovely. Michelle, what about you, dear?

Michelle Benzinger: [00:34:44] I feel like Heather, cause I have a song again. Mine is, I just came across and people may have known about it for a while, but it is Till I Found You by Phil Wickham.

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:34:53] Oh, that's a good one.

Michelle Benzinger: [00:34:54] I love that song. And the he did an acoustic kind of like a unplugged acoustic version and I just love it. And there's line in it talks about him rewriting our story. And I think that's what the Lord wants to do right now - just to rewrite different parts of our story that have constrained us and to rewrite it that bring the true freedom. And true love and to risk true receptivity and our lives. So yeah, that is my one thing. Heather, what about you?

Heather Khym: [00:35:23] Love it! My one thing is advent traditions.

I love advent traditions. I love things that point to the preparation. Because it is really easy. Like months ago, we already had Christmas stuff in Costco and everywhere else. So I think it's important to kind of like keep placing ourselves in the pre Christmas season at times through advent little devotions or traditions. So for our family, we bought a little advent calendar, that doesn't just have candy in it, although it does have candy in it, of course. But it just has little scriptures and little reflections and things like that on the life of Jesus and on the advent story and also Ann Voskamp. I love her advent wreath that I have. It's like a little wooden one. It has a candle and yeah, a little donkey and Joseph, like walking beside it. And it's just like, you put that on your kitchen table and you light it at dinner time and the kids could move the candle around. That's great. And she also has this book, which I love called unwrapping the greatest gift, a family celebration of Christmas. And it's just a beautiful table book that you can do with your children or with your household or whatever. But, but I love it for kids, especially, it just helps draw them in deeper into the story.

Sr. Miriam James Heidland: [00:36:41] Oh, those are lovely. I can't wait. Well, happy new year friends. And here we go. Right here we go with Mary and it's going to be a beautiful journey. So this week, let it be done to us. According to the word of the Lord, right? Let's open our hearts and allow the Holy spirit to breathe. Yes. And let Mary sing her lovely song of life itself. Give to us. So until next week we will be a bodies together. God bless you.

Thank you so much for listening to this week's episode. If you liked it, would you please share it with a friend? We encourage you to head over to our website, abidingtogetherpodcast.com where you can find all the show notes, links to our one things, transcripts, group discussion questions for each episode and beautiful mugs, t-shirts,

journals, and prints in our shop. There you can also subscribe to receive our weekly email with links to each new episode and all of this content. We'd love to connect on social media and invite you to follow us on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, so you can catch inspiring and reflections every day. You're also welcome to join our private Facebook group and dive deeper into discussions with our fellow listeners. If the podcast is blessed, would you prayerfully consider financially supporting us? The Abiding Together podcast is only available due to the generous support of our listeners. There are significant costs associated with creating this content such as tech support, design, website, equipment, and hired staff that we need to be able to continue offering great content to you. Abiding Together is a non-profit 501c3 and all donations are tax-deductible. You can make donations of any amount through a website called Patreon, or you can send us a check directly. If that's easier. If you donate \$15 or more per month on our Patreon page, you become a tribe member and you will receive monthly individual videos from Michelle, Heather and I, as well as other exclusive content recipes, playlists, downloadable prints, and more, you can find all the information about patreon at patreon.com/abidingtogetherpodcast. Thank you. And God bless you.