

## AT S8 E15 Advent Part 4 Mary's Mantle\_mixeddown

**Sister 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](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 and our last, our conclusion, our penultimate conclusion to our advent series on Mary. And this week, we are going to talk about Mary's mantle and just how she wraps us, she's our shield. How she wraps us in her mantle and how she protects us and desires us to take her into our home, into our hearts. But before we start, Michelle, how is it going this week? What are you up to?

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:01:26] You know, living the dream. Living the dream.

**Heather Khym:** [00:01:30] What does that mean?

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:01:31] By the time I don't even know by the time this will air it will be December. We are actually recording early so we're in November. So right now it is beautiful, but like, I mean, it can change on a dime y'all so like who knows, who knows? So I'm hoping like right now I'm good. I'm really hoping that this advent is an advent that I rest in Mary's embrace. And I rest in her mantle. I'm ready for some quiet, which I know for some people, all they've had is quiet. You know, that is not my experience. So my house is like very lively. Sister and I lead very different lives, because like was like, I've been really quiet. I'm like, I haven't been myself in... ,

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:02:13] I'll trade you. I'll come over. Let's trade places.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:02:16] I was like, I haven't had a thought to myself by myself. But, yeah, so I'm just, yeah, I'm hanging in there, living the dream. Sister, how are you?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:02:24] I am doing well. And I just was going to say something about that. And I forgot because I was like, Oh, I was just going to make a comment about that. And now I've forgotten what I was going to say. Oh yes, this is it. I love that we're recording this early and many times in the past seasons, just because we've had all these different travel schedules and we're in three different times zones sometimes. We're recording as they, as they go. And sometimes we're getting down to the wire, but one of the beautiful blessings about just our time now is that we can record ahead of time. And I'm really looking forward to advent and spending the time having the weeks unfold with Mary. I think that this gift and the beautiful cards that you made Michelle, and just this idea of Mary's unfolding heart. I too can't wait. And just to see, yeah, each week from her Fiat to her womb, to her heart, now to her mantle of what she's going to do this advent season in each one of our hearts. So I look forward to that. I really am excited that we're doing this. I'm glad we're not doing it down to the wire, even though there's something about that happens

like in quote unquote real time, but there's something timeless also. What do you think Heather?

**Heather Khym:** [00:03:22] Yeah, the goal was to help for us to have space during the month of December, because we know there's - everybody experiences so many things in December, whether it be with kids or family or just, you know, it's friends, circumstances, school finals, like all of that kind of stuff. We were like, how can we just make space in a simple way during advent? So super grateful. So great. I can't wait. I can't wait.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:03:45] Yeah, indeed. So as we usually do, we've chosen a scripture passage and also a quote. So we're going to talk about Our Lady of Guadalupe here and how she, such her sweet words to Juan Diego, what she says to, to all of us. But our scripture passage is going to come from the gospel of John chapter 19. And this is where Jesus gives us his great gift of his mama. And so I'll just actually gonna read it to you, verses 25 to 30. And St. John says, this: Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, woman, behold, your son, then he said to the disciple, behold your mother. And from that hour, the disciple took her into his home. And the beautiful thing about that reality. And then I'm going to turn it over to the two of you. Is it Pope Benedict? When he talked about this very scripture passage, he talks about how when John takes Mary into his home, he said, actually the deeper meaning of that phrase means he took her into his very self. Like he received her into his heart, into the home of his heart. And so, yes, he took her into his physical home and he protected her. He made a place for her, but he took her as a mother into his heart. And she, you know, he's the first priest. Like she mothered him. He took her as his own mother. And that, that reality of what we've been speaking of really this entire advent is I know that you've said so beautifully. Heather is that, you know, from Mary as a statue or Mary, as an idea, or Mary, as what other people say about her to Mary, a mother and a sister and somebody that I'm learning on the journey with and who's growing and who's taking shape in my heart and who I'm knowing from heart to heart. So, what do you think, Heather, as we kind of open this discussion of Mary's mantle. And we're going to talk about Juan Diego in a second, but just even standing at the foot of the cross and that desire of Christ to give us his most precious treasure really. Well, how's that for you?

**Heather Khym:** [00:05:48] I think, you know, I have talked many times about my own mother and what a gift she is in my life. Would not be who I am without her. I don't think I would be close to Jesus or on a good path at all if it wasn't for her. I feel like her maternal love saved me over and over and over again, which was really God's love, poured out through her. But I also have had spiritual mothers in my life that even though I had a good mother there was still, at moments, things that other women were able offer me. We always say it takes a village to raise a child or whatever, but I think I experienced that in my own life where other women have offered their maternal heart to me. And it has been incredibly powerful in my life. And for those of us who you're like, well, I don't have that, or I haven't had that experience, but we have our lady here who we always talk about we're surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. But I don't know if we press into that the way that we should. You know, it seems difficult, it can be hard to raise our eyes from the natural to the supernatural, you know. But if we do believe what we say, what a beautiful treasure that we have right here. Like my mom always used to pray that our lady would wrap us in her mantle of protection. That was a prayer over us from when we were little babies, you know? And she still says that,

we still pray like that. I pray that for my children. That our lady's mantle, you know, a mantle is like a cloak. You could just see the image of being wrapped up safe, protected, protected from the wind, the rain, the whatever that life deals us. So this gift of our lady, and to be wrapped in her mantle of protection. Gosh, that just sounds like right for me right now. I'm like, doesn't that sound inviting? I just want to be wrapped up in a mantle. I just want to be wrapped up in a safe mantle, a shelter and that's who she is for us. And that's what all women should be as a shelter for another person's soul. Yeah. Michelle. What do you think?

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:07:47] Yeah, I think we have, we've talked about it before, but Edith Stein says that is what a woman is. A woman's soul is a shelter for other souls to unfold or to become. And I think, like you said, Heather, like wherever you are with your own biological mother, like, I mean, I credit my ability to pray with my mother. People are like how'd you learn how to pray? I'm like really osmosis with my mother. But then you have other spiritual mothers, but also I think, allowing even spiritual peers, you know, sisters to mother you in ways, to take care of you. Okay. So like, I mean, I told the story earlier, like at the beginning of COVID just dealing with some certain things with children and it was just really challenging or whatever. And the Lord just brought me to a breaking point where I had to allow other people and sister came and visited and I was a mess. I was like, all right. And I just had to allow her to take care of me, which is not my usual mode of operation, but I just had to, and allow other people to mother you in shapes or forms, whatever the Lord offers. And I often think of one of my favorite novels is, the secret life of bees by Sue Monk Kidd. And the little girl Lily loses her mother. And then she goes to live with a group of women, older, black women. And this is during segregation and these women teach her, like mother her in different ways. Every single woman in a different way. And then Mary is, actually there is, a Mary in a statue. That's a really big part of the whole story also. But she always used to say, like, I always think of the movie too, because Queen Latifa was the main character August in the movie. And she would always tell Lily, the little girl, says, you know, put your heart on Mary's heart. And when you start pulling back, put your heart on Mary's heart and you'll realize how you need to mother yourself. Like you need to learn how to mother yourself, but just allowing different women in our lives to mother and nurture us where we have not received that or we have not been given that. Yeah. Sister, what about you?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:09:45] That's so beautiful. Both of you and that deeper, the deep receptivity of our heart to another. And when I was on my little retreat in Austin, I ended up going for a walk one day in this park and it's like, I got in way more than I bargained for. Because it was Saturday morning and this park was packed with people from all walks of life. And there's just like the random nun going for a walk, just minding your own business. Then there's people on bikes. It's just all kinds of stuff. But there's this mother that I saw who had this little boy, he had a little, like a care bear helmet on and he was strapped to her chest and she was on a bike. And it was like probably the first time he'd ever been on a bike. And she was talking to him as she's riding the bike. And the look on his face was one of like utter terror, but like delight at the same time. And she had her arm around him. I mean, he was strapped to her, but she had her arm around him and she was riding the bike, talking to him at the same time. And they passed me a couple of times and I couldn't help, but smile. It was just such a delightful thing of this mama who clearly had the sense of mantle, a custody of her child. Like he wasn't going to fall, but it was also leading him on this epic adventure. And I just, I thought that was, she was smiling and he was, he was like learning the ropes. But I just thought like, that's how life is, isn't it? And you know, many

times Mary is behind, so to speak, behind us. And we're not really sure, like, are we on this bike alone? Like, I don't want you to look but am I really? But does your promise, you know, her promise to us and I love the beautiful quote that she, you know, the tenderness, which was, she speaks to Juan Diego is the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe. And you know, when he's troubled and you know, he's troubled about his uncle, I believe, and he's trying to avoid her, which is so great. And I love how she just appears to him anyway. And she says this. She says, hear me and understand well that nothing should frighten or grieve. You let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here who am your mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within my mantle? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything. And I think that, you know, the specialty around, you know, as we journey from this part of advent into Christmas, where Mary will swaddle Jesus and she'll hold him to her breast and she'll feed him and she'll nurture him. And like your saying, Heather, I just want to be swaddled by her and just held her heart and just to rest there, because that's the safest place to be.

**Heather Khym:** [00:12:00] Yeah, there's something that struck me about her as well when they lost Jesus, which is kind of funny. There's a lot of funny things about that, but it's like, they lost the savior. That's interesting.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:12:10] Okay but don't you find that comforting? Like if they can lose Jesus so can we. Like, I think we're all in this together.

**Heather Khym:** [00:12:15] Yes! There's humanness there. And it also speaks to me about like,

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:12:19] She's perfect and she did,

**Heather Khym:** [00:12:21] Yeah like not being a helicopter parent, you know, and sometimes we feel that way about religion or about relationships like that. Like you're talking about sister, there's a messiness to what goes on. And, and many of us think, well, I'm too messy, you know, for Mary or I'm too messy for Jesus for God. Like my life isn't perfect. And they are human. You know, their humanness is what I think can attract us. If we let ourselves understand that. That she comes to us and is not put off by yeah, what is messy. And she has a lot to teach us in our humanness. Like even that aspect, I'm like, wow, she wasn't a helicopter parent. Like she let him go. She's going to let us go. We don't have to be in like this confined relationship where we feel like, Oh, if I enter into a relationship with the saints and with our lady and with Jesus, where we lose all of our freedom. Like we have freedom to go, but that she's there to be a safe place for us, which is so incredibly important for all of us. And yeah, I think there's a good point that you made Michelle that spiritual motherhood doesn't have to be with someone who's older. That there's a maternal presence that we can offer each other. I had a friend just the other day, say to me, Hey, do you want to talk soon? You've just been on my heart. I would love to just be a safe place for you. And I was like what a gift. Like, she doesn't even know what she's saying to me right now. Like what an incredible gift. I was like, that's a maternity from someone who's younger than me like that I was just like, so drawn by. And that is an incredible gift that we can offer one another.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:14:00] Yeah what you were saying about the mess. She is beautiful and she is pure and she is clean and she is undefiled, but she is so comfortable in the mess. Like that is just, I mean, hello. She rode on a donkey to Bethlehem. She gave birth in a

manger. That's not a sterile environment. That's a messy environment. She was at the foot of the cross. She watched her son, you know, be tortured, she was at the foot of the cross and was bloody and messy. Like a mess is her, she's good in that. Like, she is really good in the mess and she can remain pure, but she's comfortable in the mess to be there with them.

**Heather Khym:** [00:14:36] And she hung out with the apostles who turned away and ran away and betrayed her son and all of that. And she still hung out with him. You know.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:14:42] She's really comfortable with being a part of the hot mess express, like this is, you know, what she is. And I just think to myself, like when you have someone like, and I even think about like, we're coming upon Christmas and giving birth in a manger, you know. We sing that song away in a manger and all that. And we look at the beautiful creche scenes and all this kind of stuff, but okay. Y'all she gave birth in a manger and I was thinking back to myself, like my first two children that I gave birth to, I did it naturally. If it was not for both of my midwives and my husband, I could not have done it. Like when you hit transition when you're about to give birth, you know, and hit transition. And as the last part before, you're about to start to push it is the most excruciating pain you ever have imagined because I did natural for both. And I remember thinking both times I am going to come out of my mind. I'm going to come out of my head. Like I remember most of my first one, I looked at Chris, we went, I got back up, I was walking went to the bathroom. I'm like, I can't do this. And he's like, baby, you don't have a choice like this is going to happen. Yeah.

**Heather Khym:** [00:15:44] Thanks for your comforting words.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:15:45] He's like you got it to it. You know?

**Heather Khym:** [00:15:48] You're like, it's time for you to go.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:15:49] I know. Just kidding. But when I went there, then like you feel this, but then both of the women. I had both women doctor for us, their voice, their, you know, and I focused on a picture of Mary on both hands. Like I was just focused on her and then I got into the zone, you know, where I'm like, I can do this. And you're like, okay, this is what my body was created for. And there's something powerful about that. Like, but just feeling Mary's presence, but having another woman's voice saying, okay, come on, you can do this push a little bit harder, just breathe, just do this. And I think we need those spiritual midwives in our life. Like you can get through this. This is hard. Sometimes this is excruciating. You feel like you're going to lose your mind, but just breathe, just breathe, you know, just, you know, inhale, exhale, ask the Holy spirit to come in here, get in, you know, and one of my favorite authors is Madeline L'Engle and she has this quote that says love, takes the risk of birth all the time. That he wants to birth new things in us. All the time, but it's a risk, you know, life is always a risk. So do we receive God's grace and respond with bearing life in our lives. Even in the hard, you know, and do we trust our other maternal forces around us to be with us as we bear new life in our lives.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:17:02] So good. That's so good. Say that again. Love takes the risk of what...

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:17:07] Love still takes the risk of birth.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:17:10] Oh, we should do a whole episode on that. Oh my gosh. Okay. Well, gosh. And you think of, I think all of us right now in our life could think of several situations where we have a choice to make a risk of letting something beautiful birth or not. Or like we were talking about in our last episode of shutting down and self protection, and I'm not talking about abusive situations. I'm talking about real authentic decisions that we could all make. To risk birth, which is like you have both experienced in the natural level is excruciatingly painful, but so gloriously, triumphant at the same time. Like, and that that's the journey of Mary, right? With Jesus to Calvary and into the resurrection. During one of the retreats that we do is a Paschal Mystery Retreat. And our founder has written several reflections, which he's taken from different saints, but of how, um, one Saint just had the intuition that, you know, Jesus would have appeared to Mary first. And she would have like, you know, as you know, one of our friends says, she would have said, I knew it. I knew it. I knew it. You know, I knew it. And. I knew this wasn't the end. And I knew it. And in the book that Mother Mary Francis, The Cause of our Joy, she talks about Mary's heart is a shield and how an arrow. Shields, they receive arrows because that's the defense mechanism. Is that, you know, when you block an arrow, it, it penetrates your shield. And she said, Mary's heart is a shield. And so the arrows pierce her heart because she's the shield and how often in our lives, ladies do we experience in a very special way, because as John Paul, the second says we're experts in relationships. How many of us have taken a few arrows in relationships and it's been direct hits also, but it's also been for the benefit and the suffering and the grace won for somebody else. Where a new birth has taken place and that Whoa, Nelly, like that's, you know, You know, like Sally Field says and still Magnolias at the end when she buries her daughter. And she's like, I was privileged when this beautiful creature came into my life and I was there when she left. Well, you know, and you're just like, Oh my gosh. Wow.

**Heather Khym:** [00:19:19] Yeah. I think that, I was giving a talk, a week ago and the topic was love. And I was like, Oh gosh, what do you say? I mean, you could, it's like, can you do 20 minutes say something important about love? Like, yeah, we'll just, we'll just sing some songs

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:19:36] You've got Tina Turner.

**Heather Khym:** [00:19:37] I know Tina Turner in some ways. Um, but I was like, what. Yeah. What do you say like about love? And I was like, I think that for most of us, we haven't made love the priority in our life, yet this is what we were made for. This is what we're made out of, like love himself. Were made in the image of love himself and have we really committed our lives to being like masters at the art of loving. And this is where I look to our lady and I'm like, she was a master, she was a master. Why would we not look to her and learn from her? Like in her humanity, she experienced incredible suffering. And she would have had all the fear and all of the like unknowns. And how do you do that? She had to keep saying yes, like, yeah, we focus on her Fiat, but that yes was like, an everyday yes. She had to keep saying yes, keep staying open, not shut down, not run away, not take Jesus and wrap him up in her mantle and ditch, like the whole plan, like she could have, he was a kid like he would have to go with her, you know, she, she could have done all of those things. She just kept saying, yes, she suffered well. She suffered for love. Love was at the forefront of her mind. I'm like, she's a master at the art of loving, like, is this a priority in my life truly? Or if I made other things a priority, like, Oh, I'm going to be great at school. I'm going to be great at parenting. I'm going to be great at being a wife or whatever. I'm going to be awesome on the parent education committee or like, What, like, what about love? Like, is this really at the priority of our life to



be a master there? Or are we like complacent with letting ourselves be hurtful to other people like yelling at people, harboring resentment? Like all of that stuff. I look at our lady, I'm like, Oh my gosh, how much do I need you in my life a lot, because I need a master to teach me the art of loving. And that's what I think, you know, she's a lot of things, but. That's one of the things that she is to me.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:21:36] Like I was talking about earlier in the movie, the secret life of bees, I found this quote when August the older black woman is talking to Lily, the little girl, and she takes, they're talking about Barry. And, um, August says to Lily, give me your hand. And Lily says, I lifted my left hand and placed it on hers. She took it and pressed the flat of my palm up against my chest over my beating heart. She said, you don't have to put your hand on Mary's heart because she'd put her hand on Mary, the statute Mary's heart earlier in the book, she said, you don't have to put your hand on Mary's heart to get strength and consolation, rescue and all the other things we need to get through this life. She said, you can place it right here on your own heart, your own heart. She kept the pressure has steady against my hand. All those times, your father treated you mean our lady was the voice in you that said, no, I will not bow down to this. I am Lily. I will not bow down. Whether you could hear the voice or not, she was there. And then she took my other hand and place it on top of hers and she moved her free hand on top of it. So we had the black and white stack of hands resting upon my chest. She said, when you're unsure of yourself, she said, when you start pulling back into doubt and small living, she's the one in size saying, get up from there and live like the glorious girl you are. She is the mother inside of you because she was the one that birthed Christ. Her hand stayed where they were, but released their pressure. And she looked at me and says, whatever it is that keeps you widening your heart, that's Mary too. Not only the power inside of you, but the love. Don't stop widening your heart. And when you get down to it, she said, Lilly, that's the only purpose grand enough for a human life, not just to love, but to persist in love. Yeah, and I think that's it, you know, like I think it would be very easy when the things happen in our life. You know, like we talked about in the podcast before Mary's heart was pierced, she could have closed her heart. And one of the beautiful devotions to the seven sorrows of Mary, she could have closed her heart, but she allowed the piercing and the knife to stay in. And she left her heart open. So love can be poured out. She could have chosen bitterness, but she chose grace. You know, she chose openness. She chose vulnerability. And for each of us, we each have our own stories where things, places we've been hurt, but we have a choice. Do we want to persist in love our, what do we want to start planting seeds of bitterness? Because really, if we do the later, it just puts us in our own prison. You know, when we close our heart, we put ourself in basically self isolation prison. And I think this advent season of the Lord wants to birth something new in our heart. And maybe it's just opening a door. That's been closed for awhile and a heart that needs some fresh air and comes to the light.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:24:26] Both of you that's yes. So true and so inspiring. And so, uh, full of hope. And I just think, you know, we talk about excellence in love, and we talk about the heart of a woman and, and you know, when Jesus says you seek first the kingdom. You seek first the kingdom and everything else will be added unto you like you. And I just, you know how often he calls our hearts back to him and saying, you look at me like, like a mama when she's trying to calm down her baby, like, look at me, look at mama. Like, look here, you know, and Jesus and Mary are saying that to us are saying, you look here, you look here. You know what it means to be human, what it means to love what it means to

heal, what it means to, you know, just. You look here, you can, you look here and all these things will be added into you. Yeah. And I, you, so often people say like, what, you know, what do you want people say about you at the end of your life? Or what do you want on your tombstone? Or what would it not be the best thing to have it etched in tombstone on our hearts. She loved excellently. She loved, she wasn't perfect, but she loved excellently. Yeah. And that's what Mary does. That's what she teaches us.

**Heather Khym:** [00:25:37] Amen.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:25:38] Amen.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:25:39] That's deep stuff. That's captivating. And so, yeah,

**Heather Khym:** [00:25:42] I guess and our hope always is, you know, that like for us, that this conversation, isn't just a conversation, but that it's actually something that we can take and ponder and turns into fruit. And we hope that for all of our listeners as well, that this season during advent and even now, right at the end and these last few days before Christmas, that you would take time to create space for these relationships to grow for love, to be born again in our hearts. You know, this is the hope.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:26:10] Yes, indeed. Indeed. Love born again in our hearts is it's worth the risk friends. It's worth it. It's worth it. So. Well, my dear friends is this is our last episode before the new year. Huh? So I just want to say, Holy cow girl, season eight has been Epic. My goodness. And we don't use that word lightly. I really has been. So we just want to say, first of all, before we go into our one thing is thank you to all of our listeners. Thank you so much for all of our listeners, all of our patrons supporters, everybody who has just poured out their hearts in our Facebook page and on social media, we just, we have loved, emailed us, we have loved hearing from you. And we are just so grateful and we just. Thank God for you this Christmas. Thank you so much for all your support. And we're just so grateful that you're meeting the Lord. That's really our deepest desire. People ask us all the time. You're like, what's the best thing about your podcast and know all of us say, we just want you to build community and meet the Lord. That's all we want. So, yeah. So first and foremost, thank you. And just, just thank you for a wonderful season has been delight ladies, anything you want to add to that?

**Heather Khym:** [00:27:09] Yeah, it's, uh, we're so grateful to be on the journey with you. I'm just overwhelmed by the number of emails that we get from you to sharing stories and people who are like I've been an atheist for years and I'm coming back to the church. I'm signing up for RCIA that you would just let us see the beauty of your own journey. I so appreciate that. Like, as we share some of our journey that you also are sharing with us your journey, so thank you for your vulnerability and, uh, just for allowing us to be with you on this. Yeah, we're going to take a couple of weeks of a break with the podcast just to enjoy Christmas and all of that, but we will be back for the next season with our word of the year episode in early January. Anybody know the date,

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:27:49] I dont. Where's the adult?

**Heather Khym:** [00:27:54] it'll be like that January 4th or 11th, one of those. And you can check on our website and social media to see what we're coming back. So one things friends.



**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:28:03] Yeah. Well, I think, can I just say for my one, I've got two, one things, but Michelle or Heather, you talked about movies last time. And I think I've said this before in our podcast, but I just, I absolutely one of my favorite stories ever is pride and prejudice. I love that story. I watched the Keira Knightley version again recently. I love it. I love pride and prejudice, and I love the remake of little women. And so whatever version you like, whether it's the BBC version or the old version of women, I just want to recommend to you ladies, at some point, this Christmas season that you sit down and watch pride and prejudice or little women, or read the book together. I just, those are such great stories about femininity and the beauty and the brokenness and just the trends of the feminine heart. And I'd absolutely, we love both of those stories. Michelle, what about you?

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:28:49] I have a couple, one thinkgs, you know, Hey, it's the end of the year we have to hit at all. So a couple of things, one, I'll give a little sneak peek to our next season. We are doing the word of the year. Of course we do our kickoff every, um, January. What our word of the year is,

**Heather Khym:** [00:29:05] January 4th, it will be actually, I just looked it up.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:29:06] Oh January 4. She looked it up, will be our word of the year, but. The episode after we're having our good friend, Fr. Mike Schmitz on the podcast to do the Year of the word. And he has a new podcast coming, as I think it's out, it's already out a new podcast that will be airing in January about learn, going through the Bible in a year. And so he will be doing a weekly, I mean, I think it's a daily podcast going through scripture and I'm just so excited because I think that's something. Yeah. That we've had on our hearts. He is, but I really feel like we need a scriptural narrative now more than ever in our culture. And so the word of God, like we talked about before, we need to learn how to wield our sword of the spirit. So that is exciting. So I'm excited about that. And my second thing is not as Holy, but as good is the crown season four. And so I'm waiting to watch it over the break. So I have been on a Royal- I've been sick, not COVID sick. But sick. So, but I've watched - they all know I don't like to watch TV - but I've watched more Royal TV than you allow. It says it is the crown and I'm totally fascinated with it. And so all the different things, but it just really made me think about even how they lead, you know, queen Elizabeth, my heart goes out to her, like she's very stoic and proper, but that's how she was raised on duty. And, and isn't that the truth once you know, someone's story, you have so much more compassion for them. But man, like she's been doing this a long time and she still does it with grace and yeah, it's just interesting watching the whole story and the history and everything. And so, yes, that is my other one thing, Heather?

**Heather Khym:** [00:30:45] Yes. One of my favorite songs this time of the year amongst of course all the Christmas songs, which I adore and my Michael bublé Christmas album always good - is the song Noelle by Lauren Daigle. I love that song. My kids love this song. It's just, it's powerful. It's beautiful written by Chris Tomlin. So we'll have that and all the other one things.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:31:07] Where's my Mariah Carey. All I want for Christmas is you. Why aren't you singing that to me? Why are you not singing that to me heather?

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:31:14] Outtakes friends.

**Heather Khym:** [00:31:18] Yeah. Some dreams won't come true. Seriously,

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:31:23] Mariah. That's all I need.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:31:26] Yeah, just sometimes just won't come true. So just get up.

**Heather Khym:** [00:31:30] See, this is the games that Michelle plays she's like wants to pull you in, push you away. She's like, no, I'm not going to cuddle you, but please sing me this.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:31:40] Oh.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:31:44] It's been a long year. It's been a very long year, you can sing Mariah Carey to me. Come on.

**Heather Khym:** [00:31:50] She's like, I'll take anything, I guess. I know it's been, this is the longest we've ever gone without seeing each of this. It's hard

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:31:57] in history of the history of the world. Yeah.

**Michelle Benzinger:** [00:32:02] Okay. Wrap it up, sister. We're going on and on.

**Sister Miriam James Heidland:** [00:32:05] Friends. We love you. We love you. Love you. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and we just pray that the rest of the days of your advent are just filled with beauty. May Mary wrap you and swaddle you and in her mantle makes you keep you close in her heart and may Christ be born again in your family and in your heart in this Christmas season. So thank you for joining us. And until next season, season nine, we will be abiding together. God bless y'all.

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