

S11 E05 Transcript

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Sister Miriam James Heidland: Hi friends, and welcome to season 11 of the Abiding Together Podcast. Abiding Together is a place where you can find connection, rest and encouragement in your journey with Jesus Christ. Every week, I'm joined by two of my very dearest friends, Heather Khym and Michelle Benzinger and we talk about all things Christ, about life, about beauty, about sorrow. We laugh, we cry you'll fit right in. So grab a cup of coffee, settle in and welcome home.

Hello, and welcome to this week's episode of the "Abiding Together" podcast, and welcome to part three of our series on motherhood. Today, we're gonna talk about healing and repair of motherhood, and the feminine genius attribute we're gonna talk about today is sensitivity, which we've already been laughing already because—

Michelle Benzinger: We're so sensitive.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Very sensitive to Michelle's hair, which we had to... We just had to take care of her hair, you know?

Michelle Benzinger: Hair was sticking to the sweater.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: I know. You know, #thingsmenneverhavetoworryabout, you know?

Heather Khym: That's a long hashtag .

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Mm-hmm, it is, I don't even know what that was. Okay, so maybe what I'll do is I'll read our guiding scripture for our motherhood series, which is from Jeremiah 1:4-5. And it says, "The word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, "before you were born, I set

you apart. "I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.'" We're gonna talk about our lady today, and just about the truth and the goodness of beauty in womanhood and motherhood, and this beautiful quote from Pope Paul V, where he says, "Mary, she is a poetess, and prophetess of redemption." And that sounds like right up your alley, Michelle Benzinger, did you wanna read up the whole quote from the holy father?

Michelle Benzinger: Yes. When I was researching this, and trying to just focusing on this topic, I came across this whole quote from him that says, "She is the poetess and prophetess of redemption. "And we hear from her pure lips "the strongest, and most original hymn ever uttered, "the Magnificat. "She reveals the transforming design "of the Christian economy, "the historical and social result "that still draws it's origin and strength "from Christianity. "At this point, a second way is open for us "by our late lady, so that we may reach our salvation "in the Lord Christ. "It is her protection. "She is our ally, our advocate. "She is the confidence of the poor, "of the lowly of the suffering. "She's even the refuge of sinners. "She has a mission of pity, goodness, "and intercession for all. "She consoles every grief of ours. "She teaches us to be good, to be strong, "and to be compassionate towards all. "She's the queen of peace, she is the mother of the church." This was taken from a homily from Pope St. Paul VI, in April of 1970.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Oh, Paul the VI, all right, my bad, I said Paul V. I was like, "It doesn't sound right."

Heather Khym: It sure didn't sound like Paul V to me. 'Cause I'm so familiar with Paul V. But not the VI.

Michelle Benzinger: That was typo, okay? But it was just so beautiful. The poetess and prophetess of redemption. So I think, therefore, like she speaks of like, I think, like a poet reminds me just of someone that kind of sensitive to the, like, movements of our heart, the movements of our being. And that a prophetess, she speaks of our redemption coming to pass. She speaks of God's healing power, of His restoration, of His redemption of all of us. And like, in the last episode, we just talked about the wounds of a mother, and here we have our lady as a prototype of what it looks like to redeem, really, our motherhood, you know? For each and every one of us, you know? So Heather, what are your thoughts?

Heather Khym: I just love the beauty of the church, you know? And the Saints, and our tradition, our... Yeah, the cloud of witnesses that are surrounding us, and what they teach us about our own humanity, and what we were made for, and what life is all about. Like, there's just, I think in the world, I often, like most people, I'm just going through my day. You know, you're just zipping through your day, doing your stuff, getting your to-do's, grabbing a coffee, doing your thing, and there's this

whole beautiful story that is unfolding all around us, and has been unfolding all this time. And when you hear words like that, it draws you into the sacred mystery again, you know? Like the bigger reality that is actually going on. And so I'm so grateful for, you know, different Popes and Saints that teach us these things because our eyes need to be lifted higher than what we see. I think oftentimes we hear a lot of parents, or mothers, or whatever, just complaining about how hard it is, or how tired they are, or how just run down they are. What their kid did that was so obnoxious, or whatever it might be instead of realizing, yeah, there is a lot to sacrifice, and suffering in the midst of it. But at the end of the day, it's love, you know? Like, we have an opportunity to love, and to be more transformed into the image of love, which is what we're made to be like, you know? So, I just love this type of stuff. Like, even the language of it, which is just poetic, even in and of itself, That draws me higher.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: I think it's something that also really speaks to each one of us. And I think when we talk about sensitivity, especially as women, when we talk about sensitivity, many times that's used as derogatory comment, like, "Ah, you're so sensitive." Like, "Why are you?" And then it's interesting, you hear people define this as like, "I'm over-sensitive." So when we're talking about sensitivity, when we can, kind of, give a definition here what we're talking about. On the quote, this is a sensitivity that is so integral to the feminine personality, is an ability to see and understand the deeper needs and longings of the human heart, and to respond in love. So to be able to see and understand the deeper needs, and longings of the human heart, and to respond in love. And that's a particular part of our feminine genius is the attentiveness to the person, and being able to see another person and their whole. And one of the things that God has given us, and Edith Stein talks about that, of the integration between head knowledge and heart knowledge is, an ability to intuit the whole situation. You know, it's no coincidence, it's Mary at the wedding feast in Cana. And you just think of first sensitivity of they have no wine, and that's such a woman. Like, that is such a woman to spare the the wedding couple embarrassment of running out of wine, which would be very embarrassing to do that. And it's not her kids getting married. I just love that. Like, it's not her children getting married. There's somebody else's... We don't know who the wedding couple is, but Mary is so sensitive of that. And then going to her son, knowing he's the only person who can do something about it at this time. It just, like, that reality of, I've just seen so many instances of women's sensitivity in that regard of attentiveness to the details. We all know we've all been at conferences, or events hosted by women and men, and there's a little bit different. It's just very . It's just, I'm like, "Okay, I can tell." I think I told the story many years ago, but I used to put on retreats at our retreat center, and I did retreats and also our priesthood retreats as well. And one of the priests who gave the same retreat that I was giving walked in, and I had like decorated the whole room, and put candles and he's like, "Well, I can tell a woman's been here." He's like, "It doesn't look like this "when I

give this retreat." We just started laughing, but that is the sensitivity of the woman, and it is a beautiful thing.

Heather Khym: Yeah it is a beautiful thing.

Michelle Benzinger: AAnd I think the sensitivity of a woman to recognize the movements of other people's hearts, to recognize the movements of what their heart needs and the timing of things, you know? And it's about saying, it's not like you don't wanna classify just one or the other. Because men have those attributes too and different ones, but there's a sensitivity of what the child needs, or what women need. I think that just, you know, is so characteristic of a lot of women. But also when we think about it and our lady, you know, that she is par excellence. So when it comes to motherhood. And so, because she's created in the image and likeness of God, both, you know, they were created both male and female? But I think for us as Catholics, especially, because there's a lot of conversation right now on, you know, like what God has mother attributes to what she does absolutely, absolutely. And I just, absolutely... I read it back in school when I was studying theology, Julian of Norwich, but I picked it up again. And it's interesting when you read a text that you read 20 years ago, actually more than 20 years now, when you were in school, I'm old. And so—

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Who ever, ever knew, ever dreamed? I really like your sweater.

Michelle Benzinger: Thank you, ever green. Yes, there you go. But I was thinking to myself, when I... like, I re-read "Theology of the Body" this year. Re-read this this year, and I was like, "Oh gosh, it's so different "when you're in a different season. "It's different things." But when I was reading Julian of Norwich's posts about "God is mother," I mean, it made me weep. It was beautiful, just the tenderness.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: The tenderness.

Michelle Benzinger: The tenderness, attentiveness, you know? And so you would call that like in physiological terms, the attunement. You know, how you tune to another person, how your nervous system regulates with another person's nervous system, like a mother, and how that brings peace to a child. You know, we've talked about this before, like the importance of a mother, you actually learn how to rest from your mother. You actually learn how to play, actually from your mother. You know, these are both attentive things like physiological, they will tell you. And I was like, "It's so interesting "when I've just been on the journey I've "been on this past year." I'm like, "Oh, that's why God's made me rest. "Oh, that's why God's teaching me how to play again." Oh, because with this comes great freedom, but this

actually comes great attunement, for the people that are in charge, that I'm in charge of my little people, you know? Heather, what are your thoughts?

Heather Khym: Yeah, I love this line about the deeper needs, and the longings, the things that are beyond what you can see on the surface. And that's something that I've grown a ton in as in my motherhood. And I think I've shared before that, when I was about to have our first daughter, Maria, I hadn't been around little kids before. I didn't know anything about babies. Like, I was so scared that I couldn't do it, in the way that she needed. That I wouldn't love her enough, or as much as my mum loved me, or... There's just all those fears. I didn't know what to do, like, even feed her. I knew nothing. And so the process of starting from a place of complete poverty, and then being so taken off guard with my love for her, when she came into the world. Like, it just wrecked me immediately, and I was so shocked by it. Cause I was like, "I don't even know you, "what are you doing to me? Like, it was sad experience of just being so surprised by my love for her. And then just the studying of my own children, and recognizing the nuances of their own hearts, and personalities that are different than mine, you know? And I can't tell you the number of times that I've noticed something small in my kids, whether it's a look in their eye, an expression on their face, they hesitate with a word, and I just press in a little deeper, like, "Hey, do you wanna tell me about that? "What's going on?" And it's brought about an enormous conversation. Like, either something that's just a questioning in their heart, or an area that's a deep struggle for them, or a deep wound for them. And those little nuances of someone's soul, and someone's heart can only be known if you're willing to know them in that way. To study them, to... Not like in a creepy way, But to be a student of them. Like, "I wanna learn your way. "I don't just want to assume that I know you "because you're mine, you know?" So, that's been a beautiful thing to discover, you know? You can love better when you discover who one is.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Well, isn't that the art of love as well? That every person is loved differently. Obviously there's hallmarks of how we love, of self-giving love, or what that looks like. But to really love somebody it's not just showing up, in, kind of, a sterile standard way to every single person, it's really... Which takes a lot of energy to be present to people as they are, and as we are, and to love them in the way, not that I want them to be loved, but in the way that their hearts can receive it as they are. And that's, I think it was one of the most... The things we all want, like every single one of us wants to be in the presence of somebody who just loves us. Who isn't trying to change us, manipulate us, control us, but just loves our little parts, and the parts of us that, you know, that we find beautiful, the parts of us that we don't like, that somebody just loves us, and that is attentive to us. And that we're not generic. I think that's one of the most difficult things for the human heart. Like, you were sharing so beautifully. how about like, "Nobody sees me." Or like, "I'm just like everybody else, "or nobody cares really about me." And the Lord is

revealing to us, especially through our Lady, His sensitivity and His tenderness to us, "Before I formed you, I knew you. "I set you apart already. "Like, I've known you. I've curved you in the palm of my hand, "if your mother forgets you, I'll never forget you. "I know every curve of your face. "I know the way your heart's shaped. "And I just know you." And we crave that, oh gosh, we crave that.

Michelle Benzinger: And I think it's interesting. You want someone to know you inside it out, and you wanna be fully known. But then, like, the world tells you something else, so you shut down parts of yourself, because you're like, "I think I must conform." You know? Or, "I think I must be this." And I think even, like, in families, like I realized early on, like it's not a one size fit all, to raise all these children, and I thought it would be, but each of my children are so unique, and I was like, "Of course they were, "because each soul is so unique." But I think you learn, even if it's not said to you, I think you learn when you were little, and as you grow up, like, "I need to conform." I needed to fit into a certain kind of format, or box, that because this is what the world is. And usually you're not... Sometimes people say things to you, but you just pick up on cues, like, "Oh, I need to adjust this way, "and I need to adjust that way." And so it was so funny even coming up with attributes, sensitivity. You know, one of the things, assessments I did, was for a highly sensitive person. And they sent me a... There's a new test that came out, and they sent it to me, and it's from USC, to University of Southern Cal, where they were doing about highly sensitive people. And so I took it, and the woman looks at me and goes, "Excuse me, like, you're off the... "Like, you're one of the highest sensitivity people, "like, to light, to environment, to people, to things." And so, she sent me an assessment, and it explains a lot, you know? But then it also showed me how much I had conformed to other people's expectations, because I had armored up sensitivity. And it was so interesting, the lady that I was talking about the assessment, she says, "What a beautiful gift." And she was telling me the gifts of all the things. And I just started crying, I mean, it still makes me cry, 'cause I saw all those sensitivities as a liability. Like, I saw them as a liability because they didn't fit into what I thought, and no one explicitly said that to me, how I should be or whatever. And I realized, I even said it this summer, when I was speaking at Given, your sensitive heart is not a liability, or a penalty. It's a gift, you know? It's to keep it open. And what happens is when we armor it up, we start... The blood of our heart stop pumping to the other parts of us. And so, we're not fully alive, you know, and realizing, "Oh, okay." And it's usually the people they say, like, "Sensitive are, like, a lot of the artists," or whatever, and all that kind of stuff. But our unique parts are our gifts, and oftentimes we don't feel that their gifts, especially if they're not received well.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah, or people make comments about them. And you're not saying like, "Oh, this is who I am, so get over it." But it's, like, honoring the parts of our hearts.

Michelle Benzinger: Yeah, yeah, and realizing, okay. Like, we've often said, like, "Coming to these parts "is like holy curiosity," and to other people. Like, we were actually sitting in mass this morning, Immaculate Conception. I was looking at all the different people that are in mass, and I realized, "Oh my gosh, a big shift in me has changed." I didn't look at it through the eyes of, like, a judgment, or, "That's weird, or whatever," or like, "I wonder what their story is."

Sister Miriam James Heidland: You're talking about us?

Michelle Benzinger: Oh no, I was like, "Yeah, I'm talking about you guys. "Totally."

Heather Khym:She's looking at us going, "Those two people."

Michelle Benzinger: I was thinking about the woman sitting next to me that was busting at the other women, and just saying, "I wonder what their story is, "I wonder what their cure..." And it wasn't like, "Oh my Gosh."

Heather Khym: I almost said to the lady in front of us who was praying three seconds faster than everybody else, I was like, "I wonder if she knows. "It's interesting."

Michelle Benzinger: But instead, I'd be like, "Oh my gosh, why is she doing that?" I'm thinking, I wonder what their story is. I wonder why. Like, I was like, "This is shifted me." But oh my gosh, that woman was, but anyway, go ahead.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Well, I hear that sensitive people are converse, is that true? Heather, I mean, you're wearing your Converse shoes. 'Cause, I mean you do, right?

Heather Khym: I am probably off the charts as well.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: What have been some of your experiences also, like, with sensitivity in your home, and with your kids and stuff?

Heather Khym: Our kids are ruined. I mean, my husband, Jake and I are so sensitive, both of us. Like, we're highly sensitive people. And so they learned from the best. So they all have sensitivity in different ways, and it comes out differently. Like, you know, one is more cautious about letting out all of what they feel. And then another one is like, "It's all out there," you know, for all to see it, like, heart on the sleeve, you know? And the other one just, kind of, navigates it, you know, a little bit carefully. And it's just interesting to see how we all do that. But also, I'm trying to care for my children because of what I've learned about myself. Like, I was scared of

my sensitivities growing up. They were so overwhelming to me, that I was like afraid of the depth of what I was feeling, and so I would try to shove it down. And I got so used to doing that, that I think, I don't think paralyzed is the right word, but I just, like, stunted some of my emotional responses because it was just that became so... Like just the thing that I would do, is like immediately when emotion would come up, I would push it down even when I didn't have to. Even when I was by myself, like in the car, I was like, "Oh." I would just start to notice that, and then give myself moments of freedom to let it go, you know? And to just be like, "It's okay to feel Heather, "this is safe here," you know? And so even for my children, when I'm able to do that for myself, I'm able to see it in them too, and say, "It's okay to feel." At the same time, you don't let your emotions, and your sensitivities rule. They don't get to be in the driver's seat, and then dictate everything that you do. Like, there's a certain amount of, yes, it's good to feel, and these are God-given. But also we have choices to make, to then turn that into something good to allow God's truth to come in there, instead of shame, or whatever it might be, you know, that can take us down a different route, so, yeah.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: I think that's also the art of loving other people well. Is that we might notice things in people that may, or may not be the right time to bring up even. I think something for women is what we can do is just when we notice other people like, "Lord is this time?" Like, "Is the time right?" Like, "Is this..." "Are you showing this to me?" "Is this true, is this..." "I mean, and how do I love people well?" And I love this quote from "Sheltered Within Her Heart," of which Michelle was your one thing, this book by Joshua Elzner. And can I just read this to you? 'Cause I prayed deeply about this when I came across this and he says this. He says, "In this encounter between mother and child, "the child is profoundly dependent on her mother "for everything, especially at first," "nonetheless, this dependence is not a threat "to the individuality of the child, "but rather the very space in which this individuality grows "and matures in safety. "In a word, the little child's own unique "and unrepeatable identity is not threatened "by the identity of her mother. "They're both distinct and yet they are one, "they are united. "Indeed it is precisely because they are two, "two different persons that they can be united "in the deepest way not by being absorbed into each other "and losing their individuality. "But by sharing themselves with one another, "by belonging to one another in love and trust." And I was very captivated a few years ago, Father Mark Toups writes a advent series every year. And he talked about the one with the marriage of Mary and Joseph. And he said that Joseph gives Mary safety for her to bloom. And Mary gives Joseph space. And there's that reality of like, even in the womb where we have a space for the nurturing of life and in our hearts, we have a space where people can come find home and refuge. And it's in that space that we're not... we talk about healing and repair. We're not clamping onto people, or like you were saying, Heather, we're not trying to fill other people fill that space within us, within, you know, other people, but giving people the space in the grace

of God, to bloom and to grow and to love them and help to cultivate their true humanity there.

Heather Khym: Yeah. It's interesting to notice or to try in like I'm all about trying things. It's like, how can I love you better? Instead of just asking the question, sometimes I ask the question, but sometimes I just try different things to see if it works. Yes. Which Like, I mean, with my son, he's not, he needs some space, like, so when we're driving, that's a good time to just ask a question, but he likes to pop down and then you gotta come back up again. So it's like, don't stay down there too, too much, you know, just like pop back up again. And then my girls, like, there's a certain amount of me reflecting back to them. What they're telling me that helps, like it helps them to know, I see you and I hear you. I know what you're saying or ask questions, you know? Like, "Do you mean this?" Like "When you say that," like "Tell me more about that." And so I think, yeah, there's just a lot that we can learn from one another and the nuances of how to allow someone to open up to you and to not be forceful about it and for it to not be about me or what I think you need or when I think you should change or what I think you need to share. And I might know exactly what's going on in their heart, but it might not be their time to reveal that. Yeah. So it's like, can I just keep creating moments and space, but not just for my children, but for people in general, like that I'm in these relationships with. Yeah, space for them to open up and be vulnerable if they so choose.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yes which can be terrifying for us on many levels. But yeah, what were you gonna say, Michelle?

Michelle Benzinger: Yeah, I think to create the space for them to become and to realize, I also think when you are and this is for the people that have children at home and when you're a young mother, you... I think sometimes it's so hard because the day-to-day life of a young mother and the sleeplessness and all this kind of stuff. I think we forget that you're shaping hearts and minds and souls. Especially the deeper I've gone into study of just like attachment neuro and all these different things, last couple of months, in the classes I'm taking. I just realized, oh my gosh, how pivotal those first five years are of a child's life. How pivotal and that it'll actually be my one thing for this episode is Sally Clarkson, she's amazing, writer, podcast and writer, but I love how she talks about motherhood and what a holy privilege it is. And she's like, "You're the one that gets to whisper "the secrets of the kingdom to your children." And I just thought, when I read that line of hers, I was just like, "Oh my goodness, like, this is... "What an honor, to whisper the secrets of the kingdom." That is just such a holy honor. But I also think like you create this space and you whisper and you're attuned to these children, but also that you protect them. Like, there's something, there's a reason why we say, you know, have the term mama bear, like there's a protectiveness of a mother. Like, I mean, we see it in nature. Like literally a mama bear, you like, I mean, we learned

living up in the North Georgia Mountains. One of the rules that we learned is you never get between a bear and her cub like, or, you know, that's how you get eaten, yeah and so—

Heather Khym: Remember when I visited you and me and that bear locked eyes, we were like right at each other and you had never seen a bear. And I was like, thinking about moving there, I'm like, "heck no."

Michelle Benzinger: We've never seen a bear. We never seen all that stuff. Heather's three or four days visit, she sees a bear mouse eat all of her food in her cabin.

Heather Khym: I was like "I am not meant to move here. "The Lord would not do this to me."

Michelle Benzinger: Heather and mother nature were not one then. And so it was really, really funny- No it's totally good but I realized like, oh my gosh, just the protective nature, you know of mothers. It's like the protective nature of like where they feel safe, you know? Or they will come over. And I just had a situation with one of my older sons and we were talking about someone that I felt like was hurtful towards him. And he said, "Mom, I know you're on my team. "And you're being so protective of me, "but I need you to loosen the reins a little, "like, I don't need you to be a mother, "be like, mama, bear on this one." I'm like, "I don't want you hurt because," ... But it was so good, he's like, "but I know you're on my side and I thank you for it, "but I can fight this battle myself." I'm like, "Okay, fine."

Heather Khym: It is a good question though, because not every battle should be fought that way. Exactly. Like some are, you need to battle in prayer for your child more than you need to show up at the school.

Michelle Benzinger: Yeah, or email the teacher every five minutes

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Don't be showing up for your kids in college. Like that's their job not yours. Not yours. Yeah, exactly.

Heather Khym: Exactly. Yeah, there's I mean, you gotta know what's your battle to fight. I think the enemy does distract us a lot.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: I was gonna be like, "You gotta know when to hold 'em," "Know when to fold 'em." I was gonna dang it but it's— Know when to run, you never count your money, when your sitting at the table.

Michelle Benzinger: Okay Kenny Rogers.

Heather Khym: This is wisdom like we have never heard from the mouth of sister Miriam, Yeah but it's true, I mean, I think the enemy does distract us with thinking every battle is the one to fight and that's not how we're made. We will exhaust ourselves. Like there's some things that I've seen this year or that have come to my doorstep if you will. And I've just said, "That is not my battle to fight," you know? And there's some that are, and there's some that are in person and I've done that, you know, and there's some that are in the spiritual realm where we need to fight for our children.

Michelle Benzinger: And there some that you have to teach your children how to fight. Like how to pick up their own sword, you know, and how to like, impress, like how to pick up the sword of the spirit. How to get themselves in scripture, how to go to the sacrament, like, you know, equip them to tool them up to fight—

Heather Khym: How to use their voice.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: There's a beautiful painting, I don't know if I've had it on my one thing yet. I'm not sure if I have it. I can't remember the artist I think he is a Polish artist, but there's a beautiful painting. Well, maybe, but there's something else. But anyway, so, but it's the painting of when Jesus leaves Mary for His mission and it's the most haunting, beautiful painting of Mary, He's like on a doorstep of like a porch almost, and He's leaving and He's bending down, kissing her hand and it's a very sorrowful, like sober painting. And she is caressing Him like being close to Him. But you know, it's like a sweet, like bittersweet for a while because they know what's about to happen, but she's not clinging to him. You know, she's not grasping onto Him. She's not like pulling at His, you know, His best mints or His, you know, His tunic, but she's gently caressing Him as He kisses her hand goodbye and allowing Him to go forth into His mission, which I think has women, especially in John Paul, calls us experts in relationship and our tendency, like our beautiful sensitivity to welcome and to give people space. But also sometimes the broken attachment we have where we want to grasp at people. And we want to like fight battles for them. It's not ours to fight or kind of insert ourselves or—

Michelle Benzinger: Or manage their everyday life

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Or manage your everyday or really out of our own fear, cling onto them when the best thing is to do is to set them free into the Lord. And that can be crucifying for us as women and to let people walk on their own path that God has given them and that's hard. Those are hard things.

Michelle Benzinger: Oh my goodness

Heather Khym: It's really hard, I think some of the hardest things as a parent is when you see your children making decisions or people that you love, it doesn't have to just be children, just people that you love that you know, are gonna hurt them. And at the same time that like, there's the freewill aspect of like, I can speak the truth and I can encourage and all of those things. But like at some point you have to release them into the hands of the Lord and say, "Lord, like, you love them more than I do. "And I just ask that you would come after them, you know, "like with your love, like just be relentless "with your loving pursuit of them." And you know, that some decisions have to be made and some there's gonna be fallout, you know, which is hard, but we just have to be there, right? Like to love to, to welcome, to just continue to reveal the heart of the Father, to those that God has entrusted to us. Those are painful moments when you're like, "Ooh, I can see it coming."

Michelle Benzinger: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. And I think realizing that you entrust them to someone and you know, you remind yourself that, okay, He loves them more than I do. You know, He loves that. I have to constantly remind ourselves that. And it's really even going back to our last episode about wounds as a mother, that God is more sensitive than anybody else. He is sensitive of what our heart needs. And He knows the timing of our healing. He knows the timing of the different parts of our story that need to be revealed. And He knows that the hard parts of our story are like avenues are like these places for glory to come through, you know? And He's sensitive to that, you know, and I keep on going back and we've talked about this before, but like, you know, scripture says by His wounds, we are healed. You know? So these areas that we have been wounded is also the areas that where the glory shines the most, you know? And even with our raising our own children, you know, the area that we are weakest or that we struggle with or where we want to manage or control or whatever, usually has something more to do with me than it has to do with my children. You know, has to do about how I wanna to protect them or I want to, where I feel like it's usually has to do with one of my areas of poverty, you know, because I don't want them to fall and I don't want, which part of that is good. And the other part is like, "Okay, what's going on here?" Like, there's a fear in me, you know? And so one of my questions, Chris always asks me when we're dealing with situation with our kids, are we parenting out of love or we parenting out of fear here?

Heather Khym: Ooh. Yeah. Yeah, that's just an essential question.

Michelle Benzinger: Yeah, it is like, are we parenting out of love? And we've talked about it before, because life model. Fear bonds vs love bonds.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yes. And I have to keep-- Which we all have them in many degrees, yep. Even in relationships we have some fear bonds and some love bonds.

Michelle Benzinger: And so I'm like, okay, all right, love, you know, gives. Does not fear. Sister what are your thoughts?

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Well, I had some closing thoughts about prophetess, but did you wanna talk about go ahead Heather?

Heather Khym: Nope.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah, well, I was just thinking of this quote here from St. John Paul II where he's talking about Mary Magdalene. And we always think about Mary as a poetess and a prophetess as like a mouthpiece of God. Like somebody who proclaims the good news. It says, "From the beginning of Christ mission, "women showed to Him and to His mystery, "a special sensitivity, "which is characteristic of their femininity. "It must also be said that this is especially confirmed "in the paschal mystery, not only at the cross, with Mary, "but also at the dawn of the resurrection, "the gospel of John emphasizes a special role "of Mary Magdalene. "Hence she came to be called the apostle of the apostles." And just her sensitivity to the absence of Christ the ache in her heart of looking for Him. And as He comes to her as the gardener, right, who is the master gardener, and she recognizes the way He says her name. And that's what, when He says her name. When we know somebody, we know how they say our name, like we know it and we just know the way it... The resonance of it, the way it echoes in our hearts and our sensitivity there, which kept her in the garden, which kept her looking for Him, which then impelled her to bring that news to the apostles, which they had to go see themselves. But that there's a special, the revelation of the tenderness of God, of the protection of God, of the nurturing of God, of the space God gives us, it's all revealed in the woman. Like men and women are made equal, and they each reveal God in a different way, but they're complimentary. And so that regard of ladies are our beautiful, feminine characteristics that God gives us. They were prophetess of God's mercy of His love, of His goodness, of His beauty, of His eternal care for us as eternal nurturing. And that's such a beautiful gift. It's such a beautiful responsibility, but it's such a beautiful gift that can come and heal and repair all the places within us that we have yet to embrace ourselves as women. 'Cause we all have them too, there parts of us, we're like, "Oh, not that part," but the Lord is like, "Yeah, this part too, I wanna bring that into wholeness "and communion." It's such good news.

Heather Khym: I've been really thinking a lot about this theme of graves into gardens and that there's, you know, this, even in sensitivity, that this can be a place where we shut things down, that we've been hurt so deeply that we don't wanna be

sensitive anymore, or we've been labeled as overly sensitive or needy or whatever it might be. And so we start to toughen up and shut those things down and wall up and, you know, like we don't let ourselves cry or feel like it just becomes a scary thing. Or armor up and I just, yeah, like, God can heal all of those places, you know? He can make us sensitive again, He can soften those places and maybe turn a grave into a garden. And so that's just always the hope as we talk about these things, inevitably, there's people listening who are just like, oh. You're feeling the weight of some of these topics, you know, and it's okay to feel that. And hope is not lost. Like God can do a beautiful work. And sometimes it's in a moment. And sometimes it's just little by little, little by little as our dear friars would say.

Michelle Benzinger: A little poco a poco. It was interesting, like, I think when we were together with a group of women this summer, one of the words that two of them prayed over me were saying, "The Lord is gonna transform your heart," like the graves into gardens, which you were talking about. But instead of you strong arming your way through things or pushing through are resilient. Like, cause I could do that. Like I'm like just grin and bear it, push through, get it done, like get it done, whatever, like the next season of your life, the next part of ministry, Lord is gonna... it will be through your tenderness, you know? And it'll be through your sensitivity, which was so foreign. Like, you know, yes, there's tender parts of me, but like my strengths always been, I can get it done. Let's make it happen, you know? And it's not it's I think sensitivity to the spirit is there's a tenderness that comes with that because it means that we're pliable. We're like the clay and the Potter we're pliable, we're moldable, we're formable. And I love what Elizabeth of the Trinity says, "We're teachable." We have to constantly be teachable to the spirit. So how is He making us sensitive to Him so He can teach us all things, you know? And that's the beauty-

-**Heather Khym:** And it's usually subtle, I find like When the spirit speaks to me or shows me something like I really have to put myself in a disposition to hear and to notice the movements.

Michelle Benzinger: Yes it is. It's not the fire or the rain it's the still small voice.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah. And I wonder maybe for us to speak, that could be our prayer is Holy Spirit make me bring my heart to sensitivity, to true sensitivity, to hear you, to be able to discern the movements within my own heart of the Holy Spirit the people that you send me Lord this week. Like how can I be sensitive to their needs? How can I be attentive to their longings of their heart, to the truth of who they are? How can I set up a space for them to grow and to bloom and to heal in the places of our hearts where we either despise our sensitivity or

we're living sensitivity on a different way than the Lord is calling us to. That He would just gently come to bring those places into wholeness and communion. They would come to bring our hearts to wholeness in those places-

Heather Khym: I just had this image of like, you know, when you're outside and it's freezing, which it is here. So it's not that hard to imagine, but your hands get so cold and then you come inside and if you put your hands under, even just warm water, it, it burns a little bit like it hurts a little bit. And that there's some people listening that your sensitivity is so cold that some of this might hurt at the beginning, but to just stay there, to just stay there. And soon like that will dissipate and the sensitivity will return. So just a little.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: That was a great word Heather. Well friends, shall we dive into our one things for the week? Michelle, would you like to share with our audience your one thing?

Michelle Benzinger: My one thing is, like I said earlier, it's Sally Clarkson, she has a couple of great books called "The Mission of Motherhood." And, but one of my favorites is called "The Life Giving Home." And it's just a really great book about how to cultivate home, like where it means like really being tentative to your children, but everything from art in your home to conversations, the dinner table. But I just find her... She is a season older than we are, and she has grown up adult children, but like I find her just a really life-giving mentor to mothers and I was laughing. I feel like we've lost that mentoring when it comes to motherhood in a lot of ways, you know? I think with amazing freedom and opportunity has come to women and I'm all about that too. But I think we've also lost the art of mothering and things that we need to know too, it's a, both hands. So yeah, I will post it in our show notes. Heather what about you?

Heather Khym: My one thing this week is the mamas that I know who teach me so much about my own motherhood. And I think that that's part of how I've grown. Like I just have gratitude for the mothers around me that I'm friends with and who have, yeah, they just continually teach me, like they've allowed me to sit at their feet and at like people who are younger than me, people who are a little bit older than me, same age doesn't matter and my own mother of course. But yeah, just, I think there's something so beautiful about community and no matter what your state of life is, I'm saying still, right? Like it's not just physical motherhood, but where you can learn from one another, the things that you haven't learned yet, and to see something beautiful in someone that the Lord has accelerated in their life that maybe you haven't come to yet. And so I think it's right there all around us people to learn from and I'm just so incredibly grateful for especially my dear friends who teach me about motherhood and you two.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah. Thank you for you too, yeah, both of you guys as well. I think for me, I will make that painting my one thing. By the time this airs, I will have all the details of it. You know that one painting people are like what?. I will, in the show notes, please look in the show notes and I'll have the artists for you. And then the name of the painting. And even if you spend some time just contemplating it this week, it is so lovely. It is absolutely lovely. So, yeah. Its Mary bids, her son farewell. Oh, it's stunning. Yeah.

Heather Khym: And we should mention just like you said about the show notes, like those are on the website and also on the website are discussion questions and personal journaling questions. So if you wanna start an abiding together group, you can, just gather with a friend, or--Transcripts are in there - If you're like, "Oh my gosh, I love that prayer "that sister said." Because we hear that a thousand times on our Facebook page, you can find it in the transcripts.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah. We try to provide it and just make it as easy as possible just to abide.

Heather Khym: Right. Then there's episodes on YouTube.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yes. You can see us, you can see us. In all of our glory. Well thank you for joining us, dear friends. And next week we will conclude our series on motherhood. And so until then we will be abiding together. God bless you have a wonderful week.

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