St. Augustine said “Do you hesitate, oh man, to go this way when this is the way that God came to you?” In this show our 5th Sorrowful Mystery in our Healing the Father Wound series, we’re going to look at Jesus’ crucifixion. We’re going to look at part of the mystery. We are going to stop at darkness and abandonment and the feeling or reality of being unprotected. “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

We are looking today at the 5th Sorrowful Mystery: Jesus is crucified, or the crucifixion. That mystery consist of several things:

1. The hands and feet of Jesus are nailed to the cross in the presence of His afflicted mother;
2. Father, forgive them for they know not what they do
3. This day you will be with me in paradise
4. Woman, behold your son; Son, behold your mother
5. My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? (this is where we are going to park for today)
6. I thirst
7. It is finished
8. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit
9. The side of Jesus is pierced with a lance
10. His body is taken down and placed into the arms of His mother.

Father, by the merits of the crucifixion and death of Jesus, have mercy on us and on the whole world. The spiritual fruit of this mystery is the pardoning of injuries.

What I’d like to do today is stop at “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? You might have noticed that the 7 last words of Christ are included in my reading of that mystery. One of His last words is that sentence: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” We have talked about this quite a bit together, about how the feeling and the reality, even, of abandonment and the darkness and feeling or reality of being unprotected by a parent or someone else who should have protected you. For me, I have to say that my feeling of lack of protection fell directly on God’s shoulders himself, because ultimately he’s responsible for allowing the things that happen to us. As a child I remember actually going to him and asking him that question: “How could you have let this happen?”

Before we get to that, I’d like to take a look quickly at Psalm 22, which is what Jesus quotes here on the cross. He is quoting from Psalm 22. First of all, he has enough knowledge of the scriptures to be able to do so. He’s done this many times throughout his public ministry, and here in his very last moments he does so again. I’m not going to read it all but there are a couple things in this Psalm, and I hope you’ll take the time read the whole thing. It is a psalm of suffering and praise, and it is specifically messianic. It says specifically that this is a Psalm of David. When David wrote it, he was writing and emoting and thinking prophetically. I don’t mean purposely, necessarily, but the Holy Spirit was able to use David in a way that his writing would not only be preserved throughout Judaism but also for us, and that Jesus knew them well enough, as we talked about in other series, specifically the Magnificat comes to mind, where both Jesus and his mother, because they were good Jews, would have prayed the fixed hour
prayers of Judaism. This was probably one of the Psalms that they knew very well. In either case, Jesus knew it well enough - of course, he was God - to be able to quote it from the cross in his agony, in his most difficult trial and suffering. “My God, my God, what have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me and from the words of my groaning? Oh my God, I cry in the daytime but you do not hear, and in the night season and am not silent. But you are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in you. They trusted and you delivered them. They cried to you and were delivered. They trusted in you and were not ashamed, but I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men and despised by the people. All who see me ridicule me.” I’m going to stop right there on verse 6. “I am a worm and no man.” I find this fascinating, because I’m just nosy enough to be curious about this. Why would this be part of the Psalm, first of all, and secondly why would Jesus quote a psalm with this particular thing in it? It goes on, actually, to prophesy the whole crucifixion. “They pierced my hands and feet. I can count all my bones. They look at me and stare. They divide all my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” On through chapter 22 of the psalms we see that this whole psalm is both messianic and prophetic of, specifically, the crucifixion. It is so interesting here that this sentence would be included, “But I am a worm and no man.”

As I said, I’m pretty nosy so I was curious and had to look that up. What is that? Specifically the worm there described there is a tola worm. It attaches itself to a specific type of tree, and it dies a little bit like our cicadas do. You know how a cicada will attach itself to a tree and then shed its skin? I don’t know how long its life cycle is but I know that this worm, when it dies, it dries up and what is left attached to the tree is the exoskeleton of this worm. It’s actually an insect. It’s a type of larva. The term worm would actually be the larva of this worm. When it dies, the exoskeleton of this worm dries up. They collect those for their vivid red color. They use the exoskeleton of that insect. They grind up that brilliant red exoskeleton that is dry and they make red or scarlet dye out of it. They still do this to this day but they especially did it then. The reason I know it is because they used that scarlet dye in the tabernacle, specifically in the clothing for the priesthood. This is prophetic in so many ways. Jesus, as our high priest, attaches himself to a tree and dies. The scarlet red that comes from his body, then, is used to clothe us as the priesthood. Not the institutional priesthood, of course, but the lay priesthood St Peter talks about, specifically. I just had to share that. It comforts me. I don’t know why. I guess because somehow God takes this absolute disgrace and he makes glory out of it in so many ways. It wasn’t just that Jesus’s blood bought our redemption. It’s also the topology of this worm and this psalm and all of these things. It definitely brings me some sort of comfort to think of this tola worm and Jesus uttering his psalm on the cross as he died.

The specific account that we are looking at is in Matthew 27:45-46, which says, “Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” We see here the darkness and abandonment and the lack of protection for the son of God. The fathers say that Jesus is not crying out as being forsaken by God in the hypostatic union, or even that he is forsaken by the grace and love of God, but his utterance here is because the Father did not rescue him and did not soothe in any way his sufferings, but allowed them in full measure. Not only the full measure that we would endure if we were to be crucified - physically, emotionally, and mentally - but because Jesus was eternal he suffered eternally. I know that’s not really something that we can wrap our minds around, but that’s the nature of what we are hearing here in Jesus’s cry. “Why have you forsaken me?” It’s not a severing of the essence of Jesus’s hypostatic union, which is the big church word for the union of his divinity and his humanity, but he is decrying the lack of consolation, support, and protection. The faith teaches us that the soul of Christ was separated from his body but the Godhead remained just as it was before. The hypostatic union was preserved even in the death, the separation of his soul and body.
St. Cyprian says that “He was forsaken that we should not be forsaken, that we should be set free from our sins and eternal death to manifest his love toward us, to display his righteousness and compassion, to draw his love toward him, and lastly to set before us an example of patience. It’s that that we are going to look at.”

We are talking about the darkness that surrounded Jesus at the crucifixion. There is an early church writing around that time by a man named Dionysius who saw the eclipse and noted that it was a supernatural darkness from 12 to 3. We know that is what the scriptures say as well, but it was also at a full moon and we know that because it took place over the Passover. The crucifixion took place over the Passover, which was always at Easter at the full moon. Dionysius wrote to St. Polycarp, who was ordained by either St. Peter or St. John. Dionysius wrote to Polycarp and says, “When we were together at Heliopolis, we both observed such an interference of the moon with the sun quite unexpectedly, for it was not the season of their conjunction, and then from the 9th hour to the evening beyond the power of nature continuing in a direct line between us and the sun. This obscuration we saw begin from the east and so pass to the extreme of the suns orb and again return back the same way, being thus the very reverse of an ordinary eclipse.” I find that fascinating, because we have not only the scriptures which we take on faith, but also an early church history account of this very eclipse. The darkness was real. It wasn’t spiritual. It was the kind of darkness that everybody saw. It was miraculous and supernatural so that everyone sort of stood around, probably especially the Pharisees and the Romans, standing around going, “What in the world?” There were several things that happened after he died: the earthquake, the renting of the veil, the graves opening. Lots of things happened at that time.

Before I continue on, I want to give a shout out to my newest Friends of the Show, Sarah and Elaine. Thank you and welcome! 

You may have already been able to figure this out, but where I’m going with this is where was God the Father during this whole crucifixion? I remember saying to him “Where were you?? Why did you let this happen? You left me as a child completely unprotected.” As I mentioned, I actually asked him that question and one of the things that he showed me was in Psalm 91. That’s actually where the question came from. I was studying something called “the secret place”. Psalm 91 has that in it. “He who dwells in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” It goes on to talk about how the Messiah, because he made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the most high his dwelling place, that no evil would befall him nor would any plague come near his dwelling for he shall give his angels charge over him to keep him in all his ways. This is one of the verses out of Psalm 91 that Satan quoted to Jesus in the wilderness during the temptation there. It’s remarkable for several reasons, but I remember thinking about this psalm and thinking “Lord, I don’t get it at all. I don’t get how you could say prophetically that Jesus would be protected if, then, he goes on to be beaten, tortured, mocked, and crucified to death. How can you reconcile those 2 things? How can that be true? It’s one or the other.” As is most often the case in issues of faith, Dear One, it’s not one or the other, it’s both. God does allow free will of other people to impose on us as children. That is because children are the most vulnerable. They are easily exploited. They are easily taken advantage of. That is why, I believe, that Jesus taught us that children have a very special place in God’s heart and their angels -- their guardian angels -- are constantly before the Lord. In that sense, through our guardian angels God was with us all the time. That’s true now. But as children it’s very hard. Coming out of a childhood that includes some sort of woundedness, or even as an adult, you look around and think “Why did you let that happen?” But especially when you look back on your child self and you say “how could you have allowed so-and-so to do such-and-such to me?” I don’t claim to have any great experience with suffering. I’ll be honest. My woundedness was deep for me because I’m a very sensitive soul, but comparatively speaking I had a great
childhood. I had food on the table, I had a warm place to live, I had nice clothes, I had the comfort of a good mother, I had the physical safety of all of those things. I wasn’t impoverished, I wasn’t starving, I wasn’t beaten. Comparatively speaking I did not experience a terribly harsh childhood. I was just very sensitive emotionally and spiritually and I didn’t have a father who respected that about me - or anybody, but especially his children. I was very easily wounded. I was very deeply wounded, and that has affected me for my whole life. Many, many of you have suffered far more greatly than I could ever even think of or imagine. I want you to know that I am not making light of your sufferings at all. I cannot know them but God knows them. As we talk to him about this darkness and his absence and his abandonment and how we’ve been left unprotected as children...where was the rescue? Where was the mitigation? Here was Jesus alone with God and the sin of the whole world is on him. We see that Jesus has to enter even into that very deepest darkness of the soul, the feeling of separation from God, that sense of forsakenness, and it is a pain for him beyond all the others. He cries out with this gut-wrenching cry. “Why have you forsaken me?”

I want to suggest that it wasn’t even the crucifixion. I was thinking about this last week. I was thinking about my kids. I was thinking “You know Lord, I would never put my child in that sort of situation!” That’s been my dilemma with my dad has been how to put boundaries in place so that he is not able to do that to them. It’s just part of who he is. He thinks it’s his job to correct everyone all the time and that he is going to teach them something. His lessons are probably good lessons but he goes about it all wrong in a lot of cases so I have to be very careful. They don’t understand manipulation and deceit and falsehood. They don’t understand that and I don’t want them to. I don’t want them to tie up love with those kinds of things so I have to put those boundaries in place for them. I was thinking “I would NEVER do that to either of them!” And I have done my very best with both of them to make sure they are not in that situation with my dad. What came to me in a flash - it was almost immediate - God said to me, “But I didn’t put him in that situation. He ran to that situation himself.” He took on a body specifically to give himself in that way, in what I am going to call passive vulnerability. When we talk about Passion, we’re not talking in this instance about pain. It doesn’t mean pain even in the scriptures. It means dependence, exposure, waiting, being no longer in control of one’s situation but instead being the object of what is done. Jesus entered into the totality or the extremity of passion, the situation in which there is no limit to what can be done one, or to what you may receive or suffer. At the great climax of the story at the moment when he is handed over in the garden we see him waiting. He gives himself, purposely and deliberately, in what some have called the “agony of expectancy”, in anticipation of whatever he is going to receive. Jesus did this purposely.

I find all of this absolutely amazing. I would never have guessed a year ago when I accepted an invitation to be with the ladies in Charlotte at St. Ann Catholic Church that I would also be doing a series on Healing the Father Wound, and that they would provide me with a rental car that made it possible for me to see my parents, and in so doing I would be struck with the inspiration to ask my dad if he wanted me to come visit. And then, that all of that would have been timed just for this show is remarkable. What has happened is, because of how I grew up, abandonment and the silent treatment are my greatest fear. What God gave me in my journey with him in prayer is exactly that very thing. He gave me both of those things in my most desolate darkness. I have a psychosomatic symptom now that I’ll have to share with you. Charlotte North, NC is only about 30 minutes away from my hometown where I grew up. Since I’ll be alone without my family so I wouldn’t have to guard them or worry about what was happening or could happen with them at every moment, I would have the opportunity to go visit. So I was inspired because of that to ask my dad if he wanted to put me up for the weekend. What are the chances that, if I haven’t seen him or even spoken to him verbally on the phone or anything in over 2 years, that he would say yes? But here I am, right now, doing this particular show on abandonment and darkness and 110617_IS IT OVER YET?
silent treatment and forsakenness. Finally I got in touch with our in-house trauma therapist, Candace, and I asked her. “Look Candace, I have this itch.” I developed it about a year ago in a situation in which there was a legal issue that still hasn’t been resolved and is still an open issue. I had a flare up back in September when I had this contract situation in which my father wound was kind of tweaked some. That finally is resolved and I have a new study coming out with Ascension Press because of it. That wasn’t any fault on their part, it was just very stressful for many reasons. I had a flare up then and it was pretty bad. It’s an itch on the back of my head. It is just a little spot itch, really. It itches and I could just about claw it to death. Because of the way it appeared I knew it had something to do with stress. I’ve known all along that’s probably what it was but I couldn’t figure out why it wouldn’t go away. It’s not like I’m running from my stress or I’m not acknowledging it or I’m in denial or anything like that. I couldn’t figure out why it wouldn’t go away when I acknowledged it. What’s happening is this past week this thing has flared up like crazy. The whole back of my head at the base of my neck itches like crazy. I have taken a comb and have just scratched my neck almost raw. It is raw in some places. I got in touch with Candace and said, “I don’t get this. I don’t know why it has flared up now worse than ever before.” I have only ever had 3 flareups terribly so, but in this case this is the worst it has ever been. I know where it’s coming from. I know this trip is coming up and I’m going to see my dad so obviously it’s been aggravated, but why won’t it go away? I understand that this is the issue.

She said to me is that area is the fight or flight response, and it can also be physically where we feel powerless and we cut out our dependency on God. Those symptoms come up in stress when we confront something we don’t feel is over with. There are reasons to be wary. I’m thinking of the apostles that were baffled by the spirits would not flee and the Lord instructed them in prayer and fasting. As soon as I read “fight or flight” and “when we confront something we don’t feel is over with”, I knew immediately she had hit the nail on the head there. It resonated with me very deeply to the point where as I sat with it with the Lord that is where I went. I sat with him and the tears came, because I do feel like it’s never going to be over. Am I always going to have this anxiety in my dealings with him? Truly it is easiest to just withdraw completely and never speak to him again, but I just don’t feel like in charity that is the right thing to do. There are ways to engage. I have done that in the last couple of years. I have just engaged at a distance. I send cards on important days, Christmas presents, that kind of thing. I haven’t called him. He hasn’t called me. He could probably care less to talk to me or to us. But now as I anticipate seeing him face to face after all this time, is he going to ask me why I haven’t been in touch? Is he going to blame it on me? Realistically that is probably going to happen. I know that if he doesn’t, his wife is probably going to ask me. “Where have you been for two years?” I have an answer for that, but anticipating the stress of that has not been happy. I have felt a lot like Jesus felt there. “How long are you going to make me do this?” I’m going only to love him. I’m not going to provoke him, I’m not trying to be validated by him. I don’t need his validation. In fact, because our world views are so miles apart his good thinking of me isn’t worth a whole lot because he doesn’t value what I value. If he does it’s not going to change me at all, but it will be difficult to hear it coming from him. I don’t need that from him. I don’t need him to affirm me or validate me or my choices or my children or my marriage, any of that. I don’t need that and I’m not going for that. I’m not going to provoke him. I’m not going to make him say he’s sorry or to validate my feelings of how my childhood went. None of that. I don’t want him to ask for forgiveness. I have already forgiven him. I am simply going to see him to love him. That is it.

When she said what she said about that fight or flight – in this situation we talked about with Jesus, this deliberate vulnerability, this passive vulnerability he gives himself over and that is exactly what I am experiencing. I am deliberately walking into a situation where no fight or flight is possible because it is a situation of charity. There is part of me that says to myself “How long, Lord? How long do I have to
endure this? How long do I have to do this? How long do I have to love this person who is so unlovable?”

Which I know is irrational, so you can see how my whole father wound thing is tweaked here. What I’m trying to show you is this is what Jesus felt. He felt that the darkness was so overwhelming because it was a literal darkness. It was as though God was turning his face away from his son, who was offering his sacrifice, from his son on that cross. He was completely vulnerable. Everything about what was happening was unfair and unjust, and yet God allowed it. Jesus allowed it. God allowed it and he turned his face away in that darkness from even seeing it. That, I believe, is the difficulty that Jesus is giving voice to there on the cross. He has entered into that extremity of dependence and exposure. He’s not in control of his own situation now. He has placed himself completely in the hands of God, and at the hands of these people who know what is going to happen at their hands. We know, because we can look back on it. In our situations, if we deliberately do this, who knows what’s going to happen? I’m not saying you have to do this, Dear One. I’m just showing you how life imitates the word of God. Here we are studying about this and here I am living it. Better me than you, I guess.

What gets me so much about this is my own fear has always been of the silent treatment and abandonment and this lack of protection. When God turns his face away from Jesus, in all of the good that he was doing on that cross, I think that would be the hardest thing in my entire life to have to endure. I just don’t know how Jesus did it. Thank goodness it didn’t last very long, that 3 hours. In any case, I just know I say, with him, “Is it over yet, Lord? How much longer?” I remember in my time of greatest desolation as I was coming into the church, there were so many things going on. I’ve shared it before in my conversion story. I was coming into the church, my pastor had made me the DRE, and here I was this little Protestant convert and that very year I was the Religious Education director of our parish. My parish hated me because I was too Protestant, my husband and I were in a terrible situation because I had converted and he didn’t understand it and I couldn’t explain it, my son had a devastating accident that left him disabled for several months, and I was postpartum and had just had a baby. Plus within that whole time of desolation I lost my paying job. We went from 2 incomes to half of an income. It was very sudden. As soon as that recession hit, as soon as Obama became president though it actually began under Bush – right about that time is when all of that happened at once. I remember begging God for his presence. It was so dark. It was dark and yet I knew he was there. I knew he was there but it felt like I was getting the silent treatment. It felt like his face was completely turned away from me. He never said anything, I never felt him, I never heard him, I couldn’t hear him in the word. I knew he was there but I couldn’t grasp him at all.

During my time of greatest desolation, when all of the circumstances were so hard and so painful and I longed so desperately to sense God at all in any way, shape, or form and I struggled against the darkness of it so desperately - you have no idea - because of my fear of abandonment and the silent treatment. When you displeased my dad, depending upon the degree to which you displeased him, he would give us the silent treatment. I remember weeks at a time. I know you think I’m exaggerating but it is the truth. For weeks at a time he would come home and he would not look at me and he would not speak to me. If I tried to speak to him he ignored me. In a lot of instances I was also on restriction at the same time so I was confined to my room and he would take everything out of my room - all the toys, everything. The only thing I was allowed to do was sit on my bed and do schoolwork or read. I became a very avid reader. He would remove everything from my room so it was just bear. I would sit around and look at the walls. I was only allowed out to eat or go to the bathroom. I wasn’t allowed to speak to him and he wouldn’t speak to me. There was absolutely no warmth that came from him at all. He wanted you to know beyond any shadow of a doubt that you were at fault, you were in trouble, you deserved punishment, and that he couldn’t even look at you, you were so bad.
When all of this happened, I could not sense God at all. I knew he was there but it was St. John of the Cross, bless his soul, who helped me during that time. I think about it all the time. I have never forgotten it and I want to share it with you. What I came to know through reading his writings, especially on the Dark Night of the Soul, is that the darkness is God. God has not disappeared. He has not turned his face. In fact, God was embracing his son on that cross in that darkness. If you notice in Genesis 1:1-4 it talks about how darkness was on the face of the deep and the spirit of God hovered over the waters. That’s when creation began. There was darkness and the spirit was present. God said, “Let there be light. And there was light.” In Genesis 15:12 when God went to make a covenant with Abram it says that “horror and great darkness fell upon him”, on Abram. Psalm 18:11-12 says that “he made darkness his secret place, his canopy around him was dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. From the brightness before him, his thick clouds passed with hailstones and clouds of fire.” These are just some of the instances in which darkness is said to be the presence of God.

I know that’s counterintuitive to what we think, because God is light. That’s true but what we’re being invited to accept -- not only accept but embrace, and that’s what St. John of the Cross was really getting at with me - is don’t just accept that it’s God and endure it, but embrace it. That’s what Jesus did on the cross. Jesus was not recoiling from anything that happened on the cross. If you’ll notice, when they tried to give him myrrh, which is an opiate, on the cross he denied it. He wouldn’t take it. He wanted, because he knew it was necessary, to suffer every drop that was possible in the whole Passion. Jesus was giving himself fully and completely and totally to whatever God would allow through the people that he gave himself to, meaning the Romans when he turned himself over in the garden under Judas. This deliberate vulnerability, as I said, doesn’t mean pain. It means dependence, exposure, waiting, not being in control of your situation. You’re the object of what is being done. Jesus was the object of the hatred and the wrath of the people who crucified him. God allowed it because ultimately Jesus chose it. Together they were working the redemption of all of our souls. The point there in the mystery and the darkness, I think, is that the feeling of being forsaken...Jesus entered into that for you, Dear One. He entered into it because he wanted you to know he knows exactly how you feel. He knows how it feels to be unprotected. He knows how it feels to be abandoned by all of those whom you love. He knows what it is like to have the silent treatment in that darkness. Not that God was doing that, but it seemed so. He knows what it’s like to be abandoned and he knows what it is like to be enveloped in that darkness.

I’m not talking about an unhealthy darkness here. I’m not talking about depression or crazy passions and emotions. I’m talking about once you get to the point in carrying your cross that you have begun to be healed there may come a time when he asks you to re-engage with that person that has wounded you. Maybe not. You and He will decide that. I’m not here to tell you what that looks like or if you should do it. I can say that if you are new in the process of healing and doing all of this the time is not now. This comes way down the road when you’ve been at it for a long time. What God is doing in me right now is challenging my fears. I don’t know what’s going to happen but I give myself entirely into his hands through my dad and his wife in this time. I’m going to absolutely pour myself out this weekend for these women who have graciously invited me and who will participate with me and be there with me. I’m going to let them lift me up because I know they will and I’m there to serve them. That’s my first and foremost goal and duty. I’m giving myself wholeheartedly to that. Then, when I go to my dads we’re going to see what happens. I know that you all have been praying for me and with me.

What I want to say then, is there is no reason to suppose that Jesus was actually forsaken by God. We know by faith and the teaching of the Church that the hypostatic union was never severed. God was always present with him but he was present with him in that darkness. When Jesus says “Into your hands
I commend my spirit”, he is giving his life as the final offering. That last breath was his final offering to the father. That’s what this whole carrying of the cross, all of these mysteries, all of it - this healing is going to take your whole life. Then when you’re life is over I want you to be able to offer it back to God and say “You know what? I did it. I walked with you all the way.” Even if it means I have to re-engage with my wounding down the road for some reason, and maybe you won’t but even if you do pray for a good outcome, pray for them to receive you and you to receive them well. I’m talking about charity here, when it’s in the best interest of the person to do so. I believe at this point that it is in my dad’s best interest for me to engage with him right now. We’ll see what happens this weekend and I will have a better idea of whether I should go forward or not. I don’t know.

It’s important that we not turn away or resist the darkness when it comes because the darkness is God. Never was the love of the Father deeper and stronger than when Jesus was offering that all-atoning sacrifice on that cross. He was wrapping Jesus up in his dark presence and nobody could see him. Honestly I almost think of it as a way that God was protecting Jesus by keeping him covered in darkness so that his humiliation would not be as great. In a sense he was protecting him. That is what, I think, I am inviting you to look at. I have heard so many people say “Go to God and ask him where he was in your woundedness.” I don’t know if I have been afraid to do it or if I just didn’t think he would answer me, or what, but I hadn’t done that until recently. I did ask him and he showed me throughout my life all the ways that he actually was present there. I have seen it. I have said “I don’t know how I made it here”, but obviously it’s by grace. I don’t know how. Even as a child I knew he was there even though I didn’t feel him. I didn’t feel him at all most of the time. I was too immature and I didn’t know, but he was there in so many ways. He showed me what some of those ways were. In that darkness of the crucifixion where God “abandoned” him, Jesus was giving himself to that total passive vulnerability. We may be called to that. Jesus did that in Gethsemane. It wasn’t on the cross, it was before that. That’s why we’ve been doing these mysteries.

My encouragement to you is this: God has not abandoned you. Jesus says he will never leave you nor forsake you. Whatever was allowed when you were a child or from there to now, whatever has been allowed can and will be worked to your benefit and the benefit of those around you. I have a feeling that I’m going to be able to engage with my dad in a very life-giving way. That’s my prayer and my goal. I pray that for you too, Dear One. Don’t forget the email, the action items, and share your emails for me, please.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, go with God.