

Person: "Since my husband died, I don't feel like myself. I go to Mass, but I don't feel anything. I wonder if God is even listening."

Minister A: "You need to keep praying. God never gives us more than we can handle."

Rewind---Now listen to another response

Person: "Since my husband died, I don't feel like myself. I go to Mass, but I don't feel anything. I wonder if God is even listening."

Minister B: "I am so sorry. It sounds as though you are carrying a great deal. Would you like to tell me what these past few months have been like?"

Person: "I just miss him. And I feel guilty because sometimes I am angry with God."

Minister B: "You can be honest about that here. You don't have to hide your anger from God or from me."



Situation A: The struggling parishioner

A longtime parishioner has been caring for a terminally ill teen. She continues to attend Mass but says she feels disconnected from God and from the people around her.

- What might this person be feeling or fearing?
- What assumptions might we be tempted to make?
- What would it mean to join this person on the road, as Jesus did with the disciples at Emmaus?
- What question could we ask that would invite the person to tell their story?
- What could we say that communicates welcome without pretending to have all the answers?
- What practical support might be appropriate?
- How might we offer a spiritual resource without imposing it?



Situation B: The returning Catholic

A woman returns to the parish after twenty years away. She has questions about the Church and worries that people will judge her for leaving.

- What might this person be feeling or fearing?
- What assumptions might we be tempted to make?
- What would it mean to join this person on the road, as Jesus did with the disciples at Emmaus?
- What question could we ask that would invite the person to tell their story?
- What could we say that communicates welcome without pretending to have all the answers?
- What practical support might be appropriate?
- How might we offer a spiritual resource without imposing it?



Situation C: The anxious parent

A parent whose child is preparing for a sacrament is worried that the family is not doing enough. The parent feels overwhelmed and guilty.

- What might this person be feeling or fearing?
- What assumptions might we be tempted to make?
- What would it mean to join this person on the road, as Jesus did with the disciples at Emmaus?
- What question could we ask that would invite the person to tell their story?
- What could we say that communicates welcome without pretending to have all the answers?
- What practical support might be appropriate?
- How might we offer a spiritual resource without imposing it?



Situation D: The searching young adult

A young adult says, “I don't know if I believe anymore. I don't feel that the Church has a place for me.”

- What might this person be feeling or fearing?
- What assumptions might we be tempted to make?
- What would it mean to join this person on the road, as Jesus did with the disciples at Emmaus?
- What question could we ask that would invite the person to tell their story?
- What could we say that communicates welcome without pretending to have all the answers?
- What practical support might be appropriate?
- How might we offer a spiritual resource without imposing it?