

Grief and Gratitude Coexist

By Joy Fritz Paffenroth

I have been thinking a lot about music and its place in our lives. My soul is warmed and filled by all of the people who are participating in music and the arts, whether it's books, movies, art, dance, plays - whatever it is that they're getting involved in during this time of quarantine. I've always said that the arts speak to our humanity, and if there were ever a time when we are recognizing our humanity, living into it, this is it. Alone, and yet together.

I have been reminded, of all things, of the night that my mom passed many years ago. I will never forget, being in our living room with just family, the hospice nurse, and our pastor. The nurse said that the last sense to go is hearing. So we spent that evening talking with her - talking to her, since she was not responding anymore. More importantly, we played music for her.

As with many landmark times in our lives, which I believe this is right now, there is pain and there is beauty coexisting. There is grief and there is gratitude coexisting. It's okay to be in grief and in gratitude at the same time. Take a moment tonight, and maybe reach out to someone who is quarantining alone, who is not able to be with family around them. Check in on them. Be that person who says, "Hey, are you doing okay?"