

BLESS THIS MESS

Episode 4: Yours, sitting in the car on the drive

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We begin with book plots and Murakami, and some half term reflections, before opening our next question, from a vicar who is angry with God after burying a young mother. We look at what ministry can cost, why people reach for clichés and toxic positivity, and what it means to hold grief at a funeral rather than just facilitate it. We explore how faith and doubt can sit side by side, why it's ok to be angry with God, and how to find a safe place to be vulnerable. Along the way, we hold together majesty and mess.

Content note: this episode talks about grief, the death of a parent and a clergy member in distress.
If you're struggling, the Clergy Support Trust is there for you: [contact details].

In this episode:

- Book plots and Murakami
- Half term reflections
- Holding together majesty and mess
- Is Cornwall the only county with two bishops?
- Our question
- Ministry comes with a great cost
- A priest in distress: when to get help
- The challenges of toxic positivity
- A stark image: the vicar in a car
- Holding grief at a funeral, not just facilitating it
- Faith and doubt can co-exist
- The cost to the vicar
- Why it's hard to be vulnerable
- Practical help: we all need a companion
- Finding a person who is safe, and self-care
- Who can you turn to? Who can you talk to?
- •Finding a safe space to be vulnerable spiritually
- Changing church culture
- Practical ways to model brokenness at the front of church
- Offering different places to put your trust
- Why people say clichés: they are managing their own discomfort
- Kate Bowler on how people use suffering
- We are not at war
- Having feelings that are the same as others
- Life is never without pain
- It is ok to inhabit your own feelings
- Full stop, and no "but"
- Being angry at God is ok
- All stories are many things at once
- The Mass: "Great is the mystery of faith"
- The last act of Jesus: looking after his mother, without putting a positive spin on it
- Creating new relationships out of pain
- In an age of uncertainty, people are happy to straddle the mystery

Mentioned in this episode:

- Author: Haruki Murakami
- Kate Bowler book: Everything Happens for a Reason (And Other Lies I've Loved)
- Clergy Support Trust: https://www.clergysupport.org.uk

We want to hear from you, especially our vicars!

Bless this Mess cannot exist in isolation. If you have a question for our podcast please click this confidential link

If you'd like to comment on the podcast you can do so via our email address:
podcast@clergysupport.org.uk

clergysupporttrust

Bless This Mess is a podcast from Clergy Support Trust, produced by Meraki Creative Therapies. It was recorded and mixed by La Barca Sound, with engineering by Nick Sowden and sound design by Bekah Nelson and Nick Sowden. The podcast is produced by Bekah Nelson and Nick Sowden, with content developed by Meraki Creative Therapies in collaboration with Catherine Good. It is hosted by Bekah Nelson and Ben Cahill-Nicholls, with intro and section scripts written by Louise Stanley, and was recorded on location at All Saints Church, Tilford.

Warning: *This episode contains themes around mental health. If you find any of the content difficult or triggering, please consider reaching out for support. You can contact Samaritans on 116 123 (free, 24/7), call NHS 111 and press 2 for the urgent mental health helpline in England, or in an emergency call 999. Clergy may also wish to contact Clergy Support Trust or their diocesan wellbeing team https://www.clergysupport.org.uk/*