
SESSION 4

Based on Episode 4 | Roz

Synopsis of the Episode

Roz's deception is revealed this week, when a cheque she forgot to date gets sent back. She admits the fraud but asks her boss to wait before reporting it so she can have one last night with her children. It is clear that Roz has decided about taking her life and she tells Fr Michael how she intends to do it. He persuades her to come and talk to a committee about her addiction to gambling machines in the hope that she would persuade them to oppose another betting shop but, more importantly, to understand that she wasn't entirely to blame. But she remains resolute. In the end, after much soul searching, Fr Michael tries to stop her killing herself by telling her daughter to go home at the time he thought she would be trying to do it. But Roz anticipates this and ends her life another way.

Suggested Bible Passage

2 Corinthians 4.1-6

Theft or lying?

Fr Michael tells the story of when, as a child, the school forgot to ask him for dinner money for over a year. Eventually, when the school worked out their error and asked him what he had done with the money he said he had spent it because it was 'Better to be thought a thief than a pauper.' He then asked, 'Is that a sin?'

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- How would you answer Fr Michael's question?
 - Why do you think he preferred to be thought a thief than a pauper?
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Guilt and Shame

In one of the conversations with Roz, Roz drew an interesting distinction between guilt and shame. Fr Michael claimed that he had lived with shame (for how he had treated women in his youth) all his life. Roz said he hadn't, he had lived with guilt not shame. It was everyone knowing about it that brought shame.

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- What do you think? • Is shame linked with public knowledge? Can you feel shame if only you know about something?
 - You might like to draw in reflections on 2 Corinthians 4.2 ('We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.') as you talk.
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On keeping a confidence

Roz told Fr Michael her plans for suicide in confidence. The implication is that Fr Michael knew what he knew under the seal of the confessional (the idea that anything shared with a Priest during the Sacrament of confession must not be disclosed to anyone else). But he broke that, in an attempt to save her life.

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- While he was worrying whether to do this or not Fr Peter cautioned him against doing so because she wouldn't trust him anymore if he did.
 - Do you think Fr Michael was right to do what he did?
 - Do you think Priests should ever tell other people what they know in confidence? • When should they and when shouldn't they?
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Closing Prayer

Spend some time in prayer. If you feel comfortable this could be a time of open prayer or you could use the biddings and prayer below:

We pray for all those tortured by feelings of guilt and shame....

Lord, hear us

Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who allow others to think the worst of them so that they can keep a deeper secret hidden...

Lord, hear us

Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who have no idea how to help someone they know to be in despair...

Lord, hear us

Lord, graciously hear us.

Lord lift up our weary spirits,

So that we might find rest and eternal peace within you

May we stand on mountains and walk on the stormy seas

Give us that unspeakable joy to dance in the rain! **Amen**

Used in the programme