

On the mind of Seminarian Romy John Abraham...

A Sacred Cry

This summer, I have visited more than 170 patients as a hospital chaplain. Throughout these encounters, I have witnessed a wide range of human emotions. I have noticed that uncertainty often makes people anxious, tense, worried, and, at times, scared.

I have offered my calming presence. I have cried with patients, laughed with patients, and held their hands when needed.

A cry can be a powerful gift. When a baby is born and enters the world, the first cry is very important, as it opens the lungs and signals healthy adaptation. It is the beginning of life outside the womb.

Jesus cried for his friend Lazarus in John 11. I see compassion for a companion as a sacred experience. I strongly believe that crying is a profound emotional expression of the self, and crying with our companions is even more sacred.

Like a newborn's first cry, tears can become a sign of openness, healing, and healthy adaptation as we journey through life's uncertainties.

Uncertainty is part of life and cannot be avoided. Even if we wish to escape it, we cannot. It is simply part of the human experience. Grief, sorrow, tears, pain, loneliness, confusion, restlessness, annoyance, and anger are all natural human emotions. The more we express these feelings, the more authenticity we bring into our lives and relationships.

Jesus wept when Lazarus died. Lazarus meant a great deal to Jesus. If the Messiah—fully divine and fully human, the Incarnate One and the Savior of the world—could break into tears for his companion, then why should we hesitate to cry with our neighbors in times of pain, sorrow, and grief?

The more we normalize crying, the more we create space for genuine human emotions to be expressed.

I see tears as beautiful. A cry can be sacred. A cry can be a plea and a prayer. Crying is a sign of opening up and healthy adaptation. Through my tears, I have come to understand my own emotions and those of others more deeply. I believe crying has helped me become more aware of my own emotions and has deepened my capacity to understand the emotions of those around me.

The psalmists describe crying as prayer—crying to God in distress, for help, comfort, and peace.

Psalm 39:12 “Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; do not hold your peace at my tears.”

Psalm 77:1–2 “I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, that he may hear me.”

I believe a cry is like a melody in a minor scale, and sometimes even in a major scale. A cry is powerful. It can help us calm our hearts, channel our minds, deepen our faith, and make us vulnerable before God. I strongly believe that our cries reach the highest heavens. Tears are beautiful.

May we not be afraid to cry in the grief of ourselves and our companions. May we have the courage to be fully present with them, offering our presence and compassion, and, when words are not enough, even our tears.

Romy

KEEP IT COOL CAMPAIGN

Last Sunday, after a long hot summer, we launched the Keep It Cool Campaign to replace our 70-year-old air-conditioning system in the church. As of today, we have received **\$101,457** in pledges and gifts!

We are well on our way to meeting our campaign goal of **\$150,000**. Will you help us reach it with a pledge to the campaign? Pledges can be fulfilled in 2027. Use the pledge card in your pew by filling it out or scanning the QR code. Pick up a letter from the Rector and Wardens at the back of the church to learn more about this capital project to *Keep It Cool* at Incarnation.

20s30s BAKE SALE PREP AND DINNER

Thursday, September 10, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Young adults in their 20s and 30s are invited to the Parish House to help make lemonade and homemade granola bars for the Agape Fund Bake Sale. (See below.) Followed by dinner and fellowship.

Our young adults are also needed to work the lemonade stand at the Bake Sale that Saturday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Can you sign up for an hour shift?

RSVP to Seminarian Romy John Abraham at ra3300@utsnyc.edu for September 10 and/or September 12! (Please include any dietary restrictions if you're coming to dinner.)

AGAPE FUND BAKE SALE

Saturday, September 12, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars to pop by a bake sale happening on Madison Avenue outside of Incarnation! All proceeds will benefit the Agape Fund – a new initiative designed to provide direct financial support to Incarnation's outreach partners, including Moravian Open Door, Hour Children, the Osborne Association, and others.

In addition to purchasing home-baked goodies, you can participate by volunteering:

- **Sign up to bake cupcakes, cookies, brownies, cakes, pies... whatever's in your repertoire**
- **Sign up to set up or clean up**
- **Sign up to greet customers and sell goodies**
- **Post about the sale on social media**

To volunteer, speak with Lenore Ritter at Coffee Hour or email the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser (adannhauser@churchofthe-incarnation.org).

A Note to Volunteers about Bake Sale Drop Off and Setup

If you would like to drop off baked goods on **Friday, September 11**, at the Parish House, you may do so anytime between **10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.** We will be collecting baked goods and also packaging and pricing them that day. Please let us know if you are available to help during that time.

On Saturday morning, **September 12**, we will be setting up tables and putting out the baked goods in front of the Parish House starting at **9:00 a.m.**

Please speak with Susan Ridgeway at Coffee Hour and let her know which time(s) you are available to help set up or to drop off your baked goods. Baked goods may also be dropped off on Saturday, but it will be helpful if they can be delivered in advance on Friday.

BIBLE STUDY RETURNS

Sunday, September 13, 10:00 to 10:40 a.m. Join us in the Parish House for the first Bible Study of the program year. The Rev. Greg Morgan begins a three-part series on *The Parables of Jesus: An In-Depth Look*. Hope to see you there!

HOMEcoming SUNDAY!

Sunday, September 13, 11:00 a.m. Homecoming Sunday marks the start of the 2026-2027 program year. All children are invited to join the opening procession and wave steamers at the 11:00 a.m. service. There will be a children's sermon, blessing of the backpacks, recognition of new members, and a bagpiper! We'll also have free Incarnation tee-shirts.

Then we invite you to stay for an extra festive Coffee Hour. We'll have a variety of bagels and spreads, fruit, coffee, tea, orange juice, and mimosas. Suggested contribution is \$10 for adults / \$5 for children.

Please note: Candlelight Communion will resume **Thursday, September 17, at 6:15 p.m.** Sunday School for children will resume **Sunday, September 20**, during the 11:00 a.m. service.