

**Have Any of You Been Feeling Any Sort of Loss Recently?**  
**Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 19, 2022, 10:00 a.m., All Saints Church, Pasadena**  
**Conell Powers, Lola Piñón, Eliza LeMoine and Maya Proulx**

*Conell Powers*

Good morning All Saints! You may be seated. Have any of you been feeling any sort of loss recently? I have. One of the most difficult things about loss is that it's a feeling that distorts your understanding of other feelings. Especially when that lost feeling is motivation. It's hard to work through something when you can't even find the energy or desire to spend that time. For me in recent years, it's definitely been a challenge to find and keep motivation for something. Which is a bit of a problem in a life like mine. Student who gets out of school at 5:00, sings in 2 church choirs, fresh out of my conservatory's theater production of Romeo and Juliet, which some have called the best show the school's ever put on. Motivation is important, those rehearsals leading up to opening night went from 5:30 to 10, show nights till 11, you've got to have motivation to be there, and I did. I'm not here talking about a lack of motivation, but the loss of it, because you will always feel the loss of something more than if it had never been there at all.

The loss of motivation is a very hard thing to deal with because not only do you not have the energy to work through the problem, but you can sometimes lose the drive to do other things or sometimes to work at all. You begin to feel stuck, to see the world move on around you and the things that those around you are doing and think, "Why am I stuck here? Everyone else is working hard, pursuing their dreams, their future? Why am I just sitting here?" While the world moves forward, I feel like I'm left floating in place, and just can't quite find the right rhythm to swim forward. That frustration can be a difficult part to deal with, because it's not the joy or proud sense of accomplishment I felt when doing those things, and the grief or disappointment when I can't find the energy to do them anymore, or at least do them easily. Without those cathartic feelings, finding the desire and drive to actually carry out and complete tasks is very difficult.

So all of that being said, how do you work through such a loss? One way is just taking a break. Burnout is real, and overworking yourself is one of the easiest ways to burnout and lose

motivation for the things you once enjoyed. You can get so caught up in wanting to succeed that you get in your own way. I've done it plenty of times and I'm still dealing with it. It doesn't work all the time, but ultimately the greatest stress a lack of motivation brings is for the future. How am I supposed to study for my grades, prepare for college, for my career? It sounds counterintuitive, but the best thing you can do is to focus on the future. Find joy in the little things you do every day, moments with the people around you, find the energy to have joy and motivation will come in time.

### *Lola Piñón*

What do you do with a feeling that makes you feel isolated? You don't feel like you can tell anyone. It makes you feel like the only person in the world that could ever feel this way. It's crippling. I feel this as a neurodivergent every day. Whenever I start a new class I have to wonder if I'm the only one that thinks in a completely different way. In middle school, I had this math class. I was struggling with a worksheet. I was having a hard time and the rest of my classmates finished before me. They all then decided to stand around me, watching me attempt to continue working while loudly talking about how easy it was. Let me tell you, nothing will make you feel lonelier than a group of middle-schoolers talking around you.

You may ask what I chose to do about this. The answer is nothing. Because I didn't know that anyone else felt like me. Until one day my mom randomly brought up accommodations that I could get for ADHD. I was shocked. There are a name for how I thought and acted? And other people felt the same way? I was flabbergasted, to say the least. But also elated. All of a sudden, I wasn't so alone anymore. Of course, this didn't fix everything. My siblings still were different from me, and my classmates couldn't relate to how I thought and worked. But it was okay, because someone out there did. Somewhere out there, there are people who think and act a little differently. And to them I'd like to say hi, I have ADHD and dyslexia. I think just like you do. You are not alone. No one ever truly is and no one ever truly will be.

*Eliza LeMoine*

### Losing Track of Time

Time is not a tangible thing. So why can I feel it falling from my hands like it's slipping through my fingers? Why does it feel like a train that I'm chasing and can never catch up to? You know they say that everyone has the same 24 hours in a day, but why do my 24 hours feel so much shorter than yours? Or Yours? Or Yours? I hate that I can't keep track of time and that I keep losing it and letting it get away from me.

Take this sermon for example. I wrote this sermon at 10:00 PM the night before I was supposed to turn it in. You see, I didn't realize when I said I would be preaching that I would be writing it while in the middle of tech week for a musical, while doing a history project and writing an English essay. So it's not that I didn't want to write this sermon or that I didn't have ideas for it, it's that whenever I remembered, "Eliza you have to write that sermon!" I was on my way to yet another 5 hour rehearsal for *Matilda the Musical*, or trying to fake my way through an essay about Victor Frankenstein. Plus, I had to find time to do the basic things I need to do to exist as a human being, like eat and sleep and take care of myself. All of that added up to being... too much time. More than the 24 hours I am allotted. So, yes, I did it last minute, but because I didn't have enough time.

Time is something that I can't control and that is really scary to me. I'm scared of losing track of it. I'm scared of not being able to hold it in my hands. I'm scared of not being able to organize my life in a way where everything lines up on the hour of not being able to finish one thing and immediately move onto the next. I'm scared of... (stop) that. Silence... and long drawn out moments of time... with nothing to fill it... where I can just... breathe.

There is a sign on my wall that I made three years ago in the middle of a pandemic, and it says... breathe. I needed to remind myself to do that three years ago too. Maybe I will always have to take a second to remind myself of that. Remind myself to take a moment. To remind myself that losing track of time is not a scary thing. The Idea of losing track of time is laughing with my friends so much at lunch that I forget I have a class to go to afterwards. Losing track of time is playing my guitar on my bed for so long that suddenly its 11 PM and my parents are definitely

trying to sleep. Losing track of time is getting so engrossed in a book that when I tell myself I'll read one more chapter I've suddenly read 10 and I just keep turning pages.

Losing track of time is a beautiful natural thing we do as humans because we want to hold on to the little moments. I want to hold onto the little moments. I want to be able to look up and take in everything that is around me. I have so much of my life ahead of me and I don't want these moments to be lost to time. I don't want them to be just another thing that I did. I want to be able to hold these moments in my hands and not have them slip through my fingers. That takes losing time and not having enough of it. So I will stop chasing that train and I will let it get ahead of me as I savor these moments where I've lost track of time... and I will breathe.

*Maya Proulx*

What are we losing?

One of my favorite things about LA is the diversity of not only people but nature. You go just 20 minutes outside of the concrete jungle that we're used to and you're immediately transported into an entirely different place.

My family and I have been going hiking in the mountains ever since I was little, loving a particular hike by a stream leading to a roaring waterfall. And, although I know that with all this recent rain, the waterfall is probably flowing heavier than ever, it still won't be enough for LA's large population of thirsty bodies, our city still in a massive drought. When the next dry season hits, who knows when it will rain again?

Imagine us as that waterfall. Us, the new generation of students and hard workers and dreamers, only to be given an inconsistent stream of water.

We have so much to lose.

According to a Vox study, by the year 2040, most of the world will face extreme water shortages, with places like Sao Paulo, Melbourne, Jakarta, London, Beijing, Istanbul, Bangladesh, Barcelona, and Mexico City will all have a complete loss of running water in the next 2 decades.

And, according to a publication by the United Nations, “Increased heatwaves, droughts and floods are already exceeding plants’ and animals’ tolerance thresholds, driving mass mortalities in species such as trees and corals.”

Global Climate Change is not a distant issue. These effects of rapid wildfires, droughts, and excessive rainfall are happening at a more rapid pace than scientists could have ever predicted. We’re losing our mother earth day by day and she’s dying— she’s dying because of your generation’s unwillingness to think long term; because of your generation’s unwillingness to care for our generation because this is now our problem.

It’s filling up our precious mind space.

On top of the average teenage anxiety like who has a crush on who or procrastinating on a math exam, we have this vast ever looming sense of doom placed on our shoulders.

As teenagers, in order to grow, we need hope and reassurance that our adults will protect us as well as the world we’ll inherit. Instead, we look outside our window and it’s raining ash or flooding, our food and fresh water on a ticking time bomb.

What is this world coming to?

Youth climate change activists like Anuna De Wever, Leah Namugerwa, Greta Thunberg and so many more are trying to keep you in check, giving up their lives to persuade adults that what they’re doing is serious.

And what do you say to them? Many of your generation say it’s not a problem. They say it will go away or that “it’s natural”. Say that to the people in the sinking city of Jakarta. Say that to the majority of Pakistan that was just underwater due to massive floods. Say that to the people in California or Australia that lost their homes due to huge wildfires in the past years.

Say that to the over 20 million people forced to leave their homes due to climate disasters and to the many more that will be affected if we don’t stand up, if we don’t take action.

But, we haven’t lost hope. If we can just refocus the energy that we had to put a man on the moon, we can do anything. We just need your help.

(Maya) I'm 15 years old

(Conell) I'm 17

(Eliza) I'm 16

(Lola) I'm 17

And we can't vote yet. You are our voice right now. We as this generation are begging you to listen to us. Please, listen before it's too late.