

She was my new assistant. When we first interviewed for the job ... well, actually ... tried to interview for the job ... nobody applied. So, I was happy just to have someone in the job. But it quickly became clear that the position didn't mean service to the other employees in the department, but that it was a way to pay the bills.

She had been in the department for four years, and this was a new job for her. She had seen my previous assistant walking around, chatting with other employees. So, she did just that. She'd walk down the hall, sit in her best friend's cubicle and chat ... while she was at work.

As her supervisor, I was concerned. Especially when the other employees asked if I had filled the position yet. I had, but she didn't really understand the job, and people were starting to notice.

She had an idea of what it meant to be my assistant. But that idea was only the surface of the job. She had a hard time with going to meetings, writing reports, and especially with being evaluated. She'd never seen any of that part of the job. For four years she'd seen the other assistant walking around, chatting, and being happy.

“Stop holding on to me.” Jesus says this to Mary Magdalene in today's Gospel.

What is that all about? There are songs about Jesus as the Rock. If we can't hold on to Jesus, who can we hold onto?

What is Jesus trying to tell Mary Magdalene?

Stop holding on to me. Stop holding on to what you think you know about me. I must ascend to my Father. Mary knew Jesus the man, the healer, the teacher, the itinerant rabbi. But Mary was most likely struggling with Jesus the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity.

We, too, do our best to understand God. Usually we have childhood ideas of who Jesus is. We've seen pictures and statues, seen movies and plays. And I think that today Jesus says to us: Stop holding on to these. We're accustomed to God in certain places and at certain times. Stop holding on to these. We're accustomed to speaking to God in certain ways and in certain words. Stop holding on.

When we have a preconceived notion of God ... we end up limiting how God can work in our lives. Stop holding on. Let God work in us in new ways. Let God reveal his infinite Love and Mercy in our lives. Stop holding on.

Or as it says on a bumper sticker I saw the other day: LET GO, AND LET GOD.

Let us pray that we may be able to surrender our ideas of God and let Him work more powerfully in our lives. May we stop holding on to limited understanding of God and let go, allowing the fullness of His grace to work in our daily lives.