

I was in HI for the ICBM scare, by Joni Durling

It's a very surreal feeling to get a text at 8:08 in the morning telling you that there's an ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) inbound and it's not a drill.



This is exactly what happened to my family and me on our vacation to Hawaii. Our phones set off emergency tones and the text above is what we received.

Our kids first question was "What do we do?!" Our only response was "We pray." While we gathered our family for a Rosary knowing there was not time to make it to a church or a shelter with the slightest chance of withstanding a nuclear blast, a good chunk of the population of Hawaii was apparently in panic mode. Tourists had no idea where to go, while many locals made for nearby caves. The next thirty-eight minutes of terror in the streets were excruciating for many, but this is my husband's job so we knew if we had actually lived through the Rosary, it was probably a false alarm.

Later that night, we attended Mass at St. Augustine's in Waikiki. During his homily, the priest asked how many had received the warning. Many hands went up in the congregation. Then he asked who thought of saving themselves first. Lots of hands, but not as many. Finally, he asked who thought of salvation. There was an abysmal response on that one. You'd think the priest would have capitalized on that, but he ended up telling us we needed to "friend" Jesus with no mention of confession, frequent reception of the Sacraments, or being prepared to die. That might have been a bigger failure than the guy who pushed the wrong button yesterday morning.