

Mary and Bob often find themselves sharing common ground when it comes to philosophy and ministry. When approaching ministerial concerns from different angles, *He said - She said* is a venue to share differing perspectives. *WE said* reflects some mutual food for thought.

(And then again, sometimes we're exactly on the same page – just sayin' – *Bob*)

Pivot Point

Bob and Mary's Perspective:

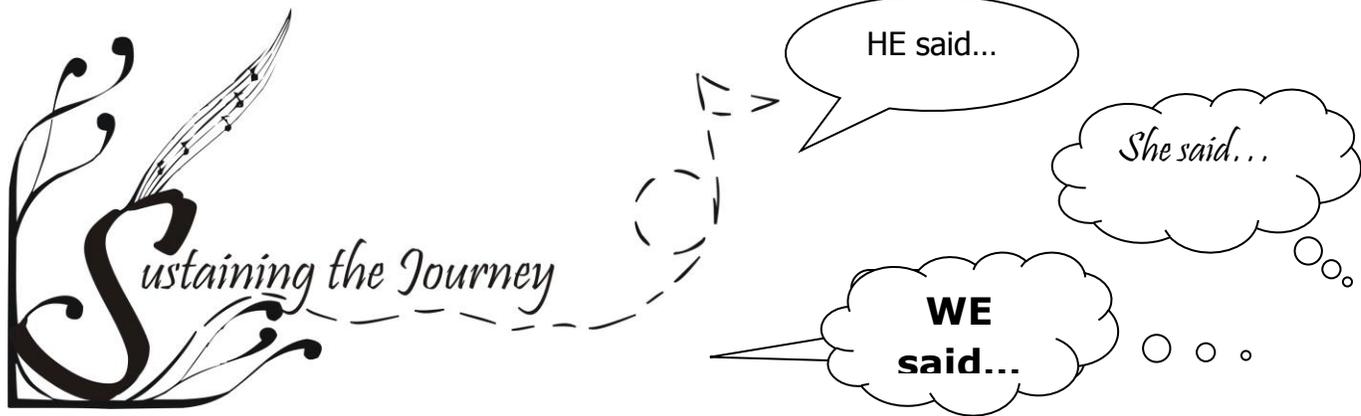
We've spent some time looking back and looking ahead, and realized that we have been writing this blog for almost exactly five years! In that time, we have weathered growth and challenges, insights and blunders, and many changes in our communal worship. First and foremost, we thank God for the blessings and the challenges – as they have facilitated much growth personally and in our ministry.

However, as the Coronavirus pandemic drags on, we are keenly aware of the risk of spiraling down into depression. Both in churches and in life, we miss getting together physically. In keeping with directives, many are not singing communally, the sign of peace has been omitted or relegated to a wave, we cannot embrace, and because of the obligatory face masks, we can't even see each other's smiling faces.

There are many who have years ahead in their careers and lives, for whom this pandemic will simply be a blip on the radar. But many are in their twilight years. Careers will be drawing to a close within the confines of Covid-19 and all that it entails. End-of-life times for ourselves or our loved ones may be spent in isolation. Even as we have been writing the blog, we find our topics circling back around to the pandemic. Year of the Mask 2020 has become Year of the Mask 2021. We have determined that we need to find the positive in all of this.

To that end, we feel that in order to sustain the journey well, we must find ways to focus on the more positive aspects. We need to find tools that will draw us out of the COVID-19 vortex.

While we acknowledge that emerging from this global pandemic is a slow process, we need to move forward where we can. The more we focus on it, the bigger it looms in our minds. Similar to facing anxiety, the thing that induces the anxiety can take on a life of its own.



Consider the local news reports: even when there's a positive news item, we still focus on the "but wait, don't forget the negative". For example, 1 million have been vaccinated – great! But wait, that's only 3% of the population. We celebrate that numbers of sick and hospitalized are declining, but wait, there are now new strands that could make you even more sick.

Enough.

On the Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time, the first reading was a very sad look into the life of Job. Many of us could definitely relate. The important thing to note is that we need to be careful not to take things out of context. The Scriptures that are provided at Mass, particularly in these early Sundays of Ordinary Time, are chosen with purpose. The first reading and the Gospel proclaimed at Mass form a unit, with one serving to enrich our understanding of the other.

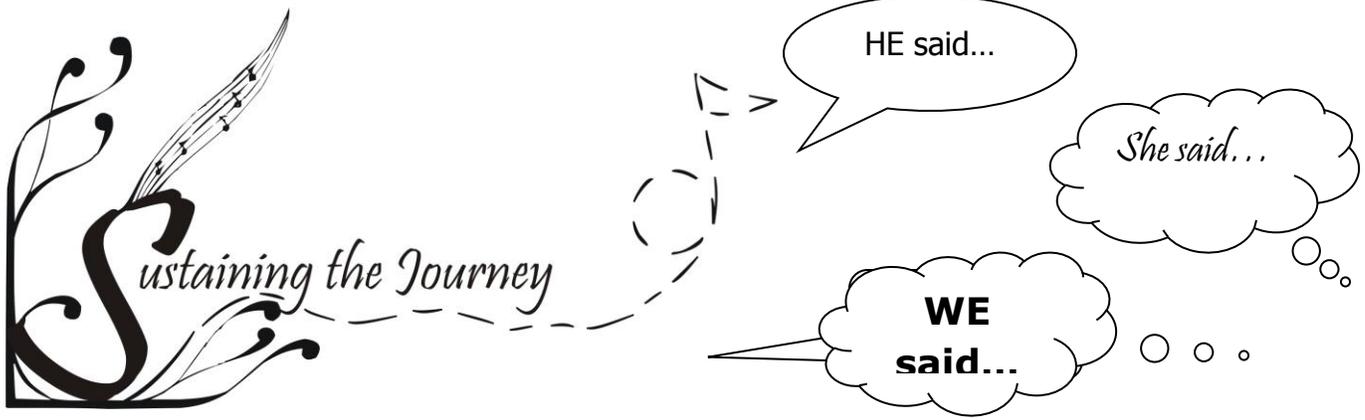
So, if we're going to look at Job, we should also recall what happened in the Gospel that day: Jesus went off and prayed. After healing many and doing the "work" of ministry, he took some time to be refreshed in quiet with his Father.

While we certainly advocate taking time each day for quiet prayer, we also feel like we've reached a turning point. We want to move past all the focus on virus and restriction and directives – but perhaps we don't know quite how. A very successful friend lived by the adage "shoot first, then aim." Rather than trying to get the approach "perfect" – whatever that means – we are moving forward with the ideas that have struck us so far. Call it a pivot point.

So, for now, the He Said-She Said blog will spend some quiet time with the Father. In its place, we are happy to introduce <insert big trumpet flourish – with a prophylactic over the bell to prevent transmission of aerosol> Two for Tuesday!!

What is Two for Tuesday? Your weekly dose of inspiration!! Beginning March 2, each Tuesday through Easter, we will post not one but two of our most inspiring thoughts of the day. Some of these quotes may include reflection (ala He Said-She Said), while others may stand alone on their own merit.

Our thought is that these inspirations will be short, digestible, and something to help sustain your journey through the week. We will post Two for Tuesday on our website every Tuesday – but also provide the opportunity for you to subscribe to receive an email link, similar to those who receive notices when a new He



Said-She Said blog has been posted. Note: We will not automatically assume that if you receive the blog notices, you want to receive Two for Tuesday – you'll need to opt in!

We promise not to spam you.

Would you like to receive a Two for Tuesday email each week? Check your email this Wednesday and click the link there!