



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)

Sudoku

Bob and Mary's Perspective

It's been a while since we wrote a blog together – a.k.a. “We Said” – and one might ponder if that has deep connotations. Spoiler alert! Not so much. With our relatively new jobs (having both changed at the beginning of this year; Bob back to full time parish ministry and Mary to diocesan ministry), our fresh perspectives have offered fruitful debates. In addition, our time drinking coffee and writing together has been significantly impacted by work. However, in a recent conversation that went down the proverbial rabbit hole, we actually found ourselves laughing at how in sync we were on a very random topic: Sudoku. For those who are not familiar, Sudoku is a logic puzzle. The goal of Sudoku is to fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column, and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

We find that the lessons we learn and apply in solving a Sudoku puzzle mimic some of the lessons of life. Here's what we have discovered:

10 Life Lessons Drawn from Solving Sudoku Puzzles

1. Making assumptions can yield disastrous results. It's better to make decisions based on fact, rather than assumptions.
2. Old dogs CAN learn new tricks! Bob discovered Sudoku about a year ago.
3. Patience is a virtue. Sometimes, other parts of the puzzle (or life) need to play out first. All will be revealed eventually! (Mary's mother-in-law would encourage the use of patience, but caution against praying for patience. The only way you confirm its existence is when it is tested.)
4. Decisions build on other decisions. In the puzzle and in life, things sometimes boil down to making the next best decision and moving from there, because things, events, and relationships build on top of existing things, events, and relationships.
5. Recognize patterns and use deductive logic. Deductive logic applies to real life, too.
6. The seemingly insurmountable can be conquered when broken down into manageable pieces.
7. A few simple rules really can solve a puzzle. A few simple systems can make life easier – just ask Bob; he has a system for everything!
8. While overthinking isn't always the best approach, do consider the ramifications of your actions.



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9. Precision and accuracy are necessary to be successful in any endeavor, including solving a puzzle.
 10. While it can be satisfying to solve a puzzle using pencil and paper (the old-fashioned way or how we've always done it), sometimes digital methods (employing new technologies) yield faster or more enlightening results. Treasure the old but don't shy away from the new. Heck, even Bob eventually surrendered his rotary land line for a (somewhat) smart phone!

Plus, a bonus one:

11. Sometimes one piece of information changes your whole perspective!

Yes, this is a light-hearted approach, but there is wisdom in making time for the light-hearted in life. It's easy to get bogged down by the heaviness of today's world and our seemingly endless to-do's. Take the time to smell the flowers, enjoy coffee with a friend, and solve challenging puzzles. It's good for your brain and your heart!