



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.

## Things We've Learned

### *Mary's Perspective:*

If you've been reading our blogs with any regularity, you may have noticed that lately we have been delving deeper into topics, and perhaps reflecting the heaviness of the world around us. It's time to lighten things up! Therefore, our blogs in August this year provide some insights we have gleaned over our combined 75+ years of liturgical ministry and 120+ years (dear God, are we that old?) of life experience.

### What I've learned from Funeral Planning

- All families have "stuff" – it might be different stuff, but they all have it.
- Every family's needs are different. And what was good for Aunt Maisey's funeral may not necessarily be the right choice for Uncle Joe's funeral.
- People generally don't understand liturgy.
- When guiding a family through funeral planning, the minister needs to be gentle, firm, and listen to them – it helps to know what they are saying / pick up on where they are coming from – but also, they come in need of direction. It's the minister's job to synthesize wants and needs while being faithful to the rubrics.
- Funeral directors don't necessarily know Catholic funeral rubrics.
- Pre-planning is key to being less stressful when the end comes.
- It is wise to stock up on Kleenex and bottles of water, for both planning and funerals.
- Just because someone can, doesn't mean they should. Aunt Gertrude might not be the best choice to sing Ave Maria.
- There are more than 6 acceptable/appropriate funeral songs – the familiar ones may bring comfort (and that's good) but you are not limited to choosing from those six.
- A luncheon/gathering for food can provide great opportunity for healing and sharing of memories – even better than a formal eulogy. The Catholic Funeral Rite does NOT call for a eulogy. It never has.

### What I've learned from Walking

- In Cleveland, the Metroparks offer an endless supply of trails. There's no reason to ever be bored with your path because you can pick another one so easily!



- Toodling through the neighborhood, even if it's a short block, is better than nothing. Plus, sidewalks are sometimes easier on the legs than more rugged park trails.
- If you own a treadmill (or Nordic Trak or stair-stepper or elliptical machine) and it's a great laundry-holder, it is a source of mental clutter. Commit to walking elsewhere and get rid of it. You'll appreciate the found space in your house and the mental benefits of walking outdoors.
- Walking with a buddy accomplishes more in the long run. Friends keep us accountable and entertained and creative, making it more likely to stick with a walking plan and to develop great ideas along the way.
- It's okay to have different buddies for different purposes. Perhaps one likes to stroll at a leisurely pace but for long distances, while others are better at shorter paths but faster speeds. The true gem is the friend who recognizes when you need a good sweat and when you need a large milkshake!
- There are certainly times for walking quietly absorbed in thought, but podcasts, audio books, and streaming music can make walks more fruitful. And cellular devices make it easy to play any soundtrack.
- It's actually good to venture out in snow occasionally. Just remember to dress in layers!
- GPS is a valuable tool. Enough said.

*Bob's Perspective:*

#### Keys to a Successful Retirement

- Have a plan before you retire.
- Figure out finances:
  - Get your ducks in a row early.
  - Take the time to explore your benefits, and get an agent for health and life insurance. (Don't do it on your own – they're the pros.)
  - Don't make quick decisions regarding life choices. It takes a while to adjust and recognize what works for you/feeds your soul.
- Get out of the house every day! (Go to church, for a walk, some activity...)
- Eat proportionately to your activities – if you're not doing a lot, don't eat a lot!
- Minimize your television/computer time – they can suck you in big time.
- Develop a routine – try to maintain a consistent bedtime, wake time, and eating times; and schedule both chores and fun activities.
- Have variety in your week's schedule so it's not monotonous/boring.
- Look into volunteering or having a part-time job. Pocket money is nice and relieves the burden of worrying about your budget.



- SOCIALIZE – get involved with a group, enroll in some activities, explore local community centers, etc. Check out Silver Sneakers – often it’s covered by your benefits! Be intentional about spending time with friends.
- Look with a fresh eye at decluttering – if you haven’t used it in 5 years, you probably don’t need it.

#### What I’ve Learned from Life

- Nothing is forever except the love of God.
- Things change, people change, our surroundings change. Learn to accept change and then move on.
- It’s never too late to learn something new.
- God has created each of us to be great in our own way.
- We should never allow ourselves to become comfortable with the status quo.
- History isn’t something we should avoid or rewrite. It’s in understanding what has been that gives us the power to change the future.
- Positive change can come only from within. When we truly believe in ourselves, doors will open wide.
- If we wish to be loved, we must first learn to love others.
- The definition of insanity: Doing the same thing over and over the same way and expecting a different result.
- Read the directions before you put food in the microwave. *<Note from Mary – this is a really important one, particularly for Bob! Also, consider where the smoke detectors and fire extinguisher in your house are located.>*
- Sort colored clothes from white clothes and then wash them separately.
- Take time each day to give thanks to God for all we have - no matter how great or how small.