

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

Resurrection

Mary's Perspective:

In order for resurrection to occur, something first must die. It's a simple statement that can sometimes carry a large burden. Death is hard. We don't want to let go. Whether it's a human life, or a path we've chosen, even with the hope of resurrection, we first must surrender to death.

As we look to Easter, we recall that there were very dark times before the glory of Christ's resurrection. (As an exhausted liturgical minister, I'm giggling because I feel like there have been some very dark times, just in the past few weeks!) But we surrender to death, confident of new life to come.

Whether you face a new path, a job change, new relationship or venture, in order for there to be new growth, many times an old way of doing things or an old way of looking at something has to die first. For the new relationship/path to thrive, we need to be open to new ways.

When you're weeding the garden to make room for new plants, the easiest thing to pull out is what's already dead and just taking up room. When you take a look at your life, what is dead or nearly dead, that would be the easiest to cast aside? What is one thing in your life that isn't life-giving right now, and would be pretty easy to let go of? What's one thing that you could cast aside and grow something better in its place?

Even when we want to make big changes in life, the best way to accomplish it is one small step at a time. Christianity spread because folks were willing to let go of "how we've always seen things" and to be open to a new path. Whether your new growth involves finances or personal well-being, spirituality or education, consider what small changes can lead you on the path.

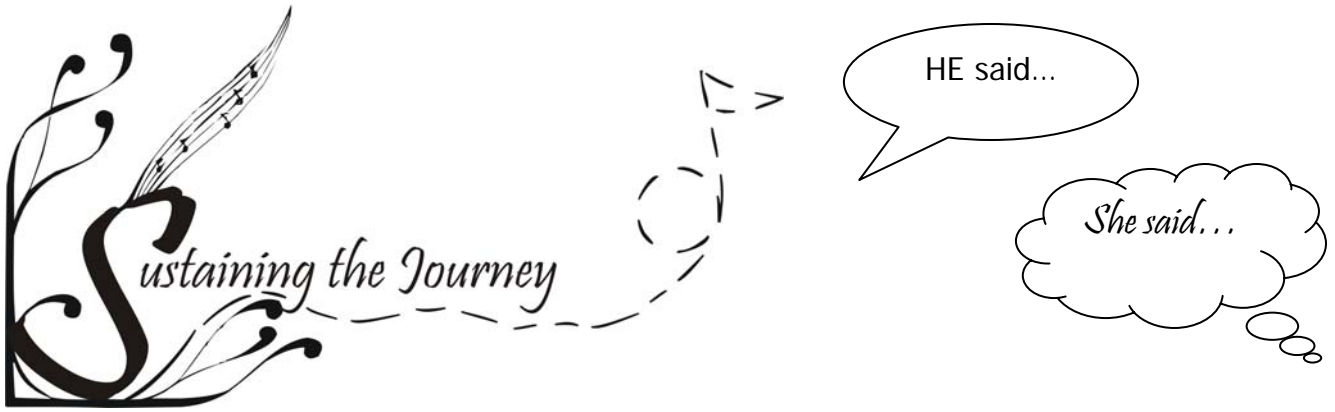
Easter is here. Spring is in the air. What will rise in your life?

Bob's Perspective:

I'm reminded of the words of Jesus in St. John's Gospel:

*"Amen, amen, I say to you,
unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies,
it remains just a grain of wheat;
but if it dies, it produces much fruit." (John 12:24)*

In this particular Gospel, the phrase "Amen, amen I say to you," is attributed to Jesus 25 times. This is a literary device to indicate that what follows is *really important*. From one point of view, our Lord is making an obvious reference to his impending passion, death and resurrection. But from another point of view, Jesus offers us a



metaphor with holds some very pragmatic advice. “Amen, amen” could well be translated in this case as “Now hear this!” The importance indicated in the particular passage is that in order for us to grow in new ways, old ways have to perish. In the same way that a grain of wheat has to break free of its husk in order produce fruit, we have to break free from the husks in our lives that hold us back from blossoming into better individuals. One might ask:

- Does the husk of prejudice keep me from accepting the worth and dignity of other people?
- Does the husk of self-centeredness keep me from being a more attentive family member?
- Does the husk of secularism keep me from being more prayerful?
- Does the husk of greed keep me from being more generous with my resources?
- Does the husk of an unhealthy lifestyle trait keep me from conquering an addiction?
- Does the husk of indifference keep me from taking a moral stand?

The list can go on and on.

May the blessings of this Easter Season strengthen us to break free of our husks and blossom!