

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.

Motorcycling and Liturgy

Bob's Perspective:

A number of years ago, my wife Maureen and I took up the art of motorcycling. We both purchased Yamaha Zuma 125 scooters. (O.K., I know what you youngsters are thinking, but I'm not a spring chicken so give me a break.) As I first started riding, without the benefit of any formal instruction, my eyes were always looking down so I could immediately react to bumps, potholes and road-kill. I began to think, "What a miserable experience this is. How could anybody enjoy this? This is nerve-wracking." Then I took a formal class and a new world was opened to me. The instructor told me to keep my eyes up and to look ahead to the destination. That way, I would easily maneuver around obstacles, but at the same time, have a clearer view of my destination and the ability to enjoy the beauty my surroundings. Motorcycling became one of my favorite past-times.

It seems to me that the same thing holds true with Liturgy. Many times we become so intent on technicalities that we miss the beauty of what's taking place. This became clear to me some time back while preparing for a First Communion celebration. A parent asked me if their child could have a "job" during Mass to make their First Communion "special." I asked, "what kind of a job can make receiving the Body and Blood of Christ for the first time more special?" "I don't know," replied the parent, "just like doing a reading or something, so that my daughter will look back and remember this day."

Another incident comes to mind, when on a particularly busy Sunday morning, one of our ministers came up to me and asked, "Is there anything special going on at Mass today?" I answered, "Yes, the celebration of Eucharist." The minister responded, "Yeah, that, but is there anything special?"

I'm going to leave it at that.



Mary's perspective:

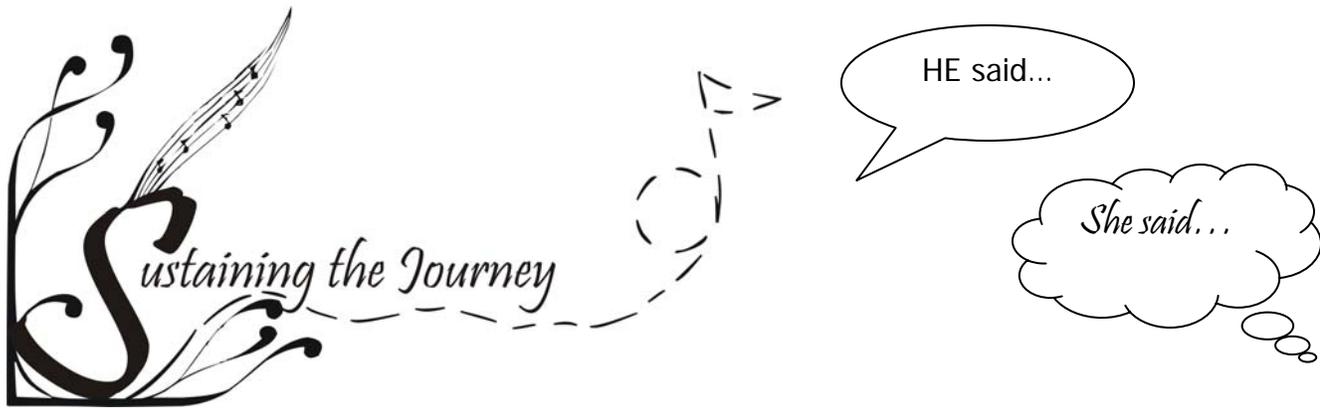
All in... It's a phrase that has been used a lot recently in the Cleveland area, as we watched (for the first time in my lifetime) a Cleveland professional sports team conquer a seemingly unattainable goal. Coming from behind, last-second buzzer beaters, heart-stopping drama - we had it all. And from interviews to tee shirts to wall murals around town, the message was consistent: *All in*.

To borrow a thought from our pastor, I think we as Catholics are called to be *all in*. Reflecting on these scriptures of Summer Ordinary Time, we hear the message over and over: Follow me. Drop what you're doing and live in a radical new way. Go and tell others. Be *all in*. Whether it's the disciples in Jesus' time, or a church implementing changes to the Roman Missal, or a diocese adapting to a restructuring, we are called to a radical journey. And the only way to truly transform lives is to be *all in*. To be fully committed; to be resolutely determined. There are no options and no excuses and no "plan b". You're in or you're not, but if you're in, you are called to be *all in*.

So then the question becomes, do we have that kind of resolute determination? That solid commitment to our faith journey? Are we *all in*?

Pondering these questions may take you down different roads. As a professional liturgical musician, I may reflect on whether my prayer and participation at my fourth mass this weekend was as conscious as my first mass - or did I allow myself to get distracted by thinking about the intro for the next song, or what I was going to have for lunch later? As a mom, am I *all in* with the message I impart to my kids? Or do I look the other way when challenging their decisions would be very unpopular? When a co-worker shares a juicy bit of gossip, do I join in? If a stranger meets me, would they recognize quickly my faith and values? Do I live my life so focused on moving from one project to the next, that I forget to take the time to thank God for the very air I breathe?

Bob's motorcycling imagery is very valid - if you're so busy looking down or back or waiting for the next scary obstacle, you fail to see the beauty that is ahead. I prefer my cycling to be powered by my own two legs, but I agree wholeheartedly. When I get on my bike and ride, I get such a feeling of freedom. I rarely know quite what path I'll take (if you know me and are smirking right now about my lack of directional skills, knock it off and focus!) - but it is exhilarating to feel the adrenaline and to clear my head and to meditate and to pedal until my legs are noodles. When my kids were little and I would bike with them, one of the most important things they learned was to not worry so much about the bumps - but to appreciate God's beauty around us. Yes, we had our



share of wobbles and scraped knees, but we also knew to look for the bunnies and appreciate the cool breeze and the perfectly timed traffic light. That kind of riding is *all in*. I can't imagine any other way.

This is a blog, not an examination of conscience...but we do believe in the importance of taking time to reflect and to consider who we are - and whose we are. We all have a calling, and it is a radical journey - often not on the path of societal norms. Are we fully committed in all we do, beyond an hour on Sunday morning? Are we *all in*?

Blogger's Prospective – Ken and Grace Enos

Bob and Mary both have a great message in *Sustaining the Journey* as usual. I like the way Bob brought out how sometime we are not paying attention where we are headed. It reminds me of how many times I have been lost on my journey in faith. Many times Scripture reminds me how important the Word of God is in my life, and how important it is for me to share it with others. Without the Eucharist, I would definitely be lost on my road of faith. Mary points out a good message about being all in! Especially during the summertime, I am busy working in the garden, watching the fruits of my labor produce both beautiful flowers and a bountiful harvest of vegetables. When I am in the garden, I can see the beauty that is created from a seed, that only He can provide. He provides the light, the water, the oxygen, and the nutrients that they need. I just tend to them. So my journey in faith is the same, because I need to be fed like the plants are, but in a different way. I need to attend Mass so I can be fed with the Scripture, I need to sing the wonderful music and God's praises. Prayer, allows me to speak to God, to ask for forgiveness, and ask what He wants me to do. Most important the Body and Blood of Christ, is the most important part of the mass. Without it, I cannot do the work that Jesus wants me to do. After being fed with God's Word, music, and receiving the Holy Eucharist, I am able to go and minister to others. As September 11th nears, it reminds all of us how we came together as a Nation in prayer. I look forward to Bob and Mary's Prayer for Peace for our Nation and our first responders. Bob and Mary, Thank you for your ministry. We have been blessed to have you both.