

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.

Responsorial Psalms

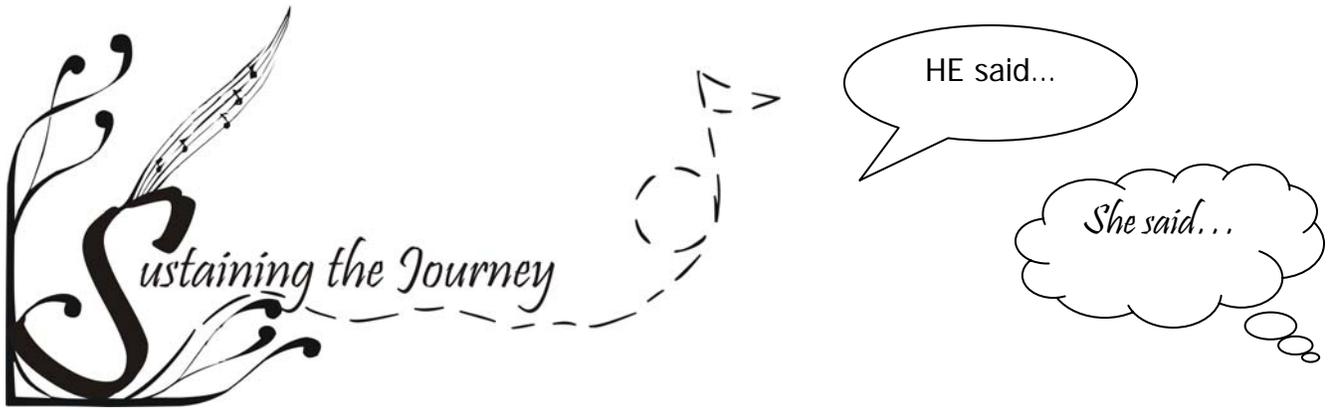
Bob's Perspective:

It is important to examine the texts of any selection being considered for use as a Responsorial Psalm. We understand that this psalm is being utilized as a proclamation of scripture within the Liturgy of the Word. Therefore, it should be given the same dignity as that of the other readings, which we would not consider altering as well. While I feel that many adaptations (such as "Shepherd Me, O God) are beautiful, and can be used in a variety of places in the Mass, Liturgists and Music Directors need to be careful that the adaptations are true to the text and to the intent of purpose. The purpose of the Responsorial Psalm is not "a musical interlude" between readings. Rather, it is the Assembly's response to the First Reading.

I'm not saying that adaptations are never appropriate. In order to preserve musical integrity, sometimes slight textual adaptations need to be made – and that's fine as long as the integrity of the text is considered and given first priority.

Mary's perspective:

While I recognize the importance of staying true to Sacred Scripture, I also try to balance that with a pastoral approach. I'm blessed to minister in a church where participation has always been a priority, and our community sings. In the 1980's, when volumes of *Psalms for the Church Year* were published and so many artists wrote beautiful adaptations of psalms, our assembly learned and embraced them. So if the psalm of the day is one that our assembly has learned as a lyrical version, even though slightly adapted, I would rather give



them the opportunity to pray their response than struggle with learning a newer -stringent to the text - version.

Our assembly does not respond as well to chanted melodies as they do to lyrical melodies - though every assembly is different, and I have experienced Bob's assembly responding vibrantly to a chanted psalm. Therefore, I have at times used a mixture of a lyrical response with chanted verses so that the people embrace their part, yet the cantor proclaims words true to Scripture. When such a piece doesn't exist, don't be afraid to write your own!