

religion is SERIOUS business

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Mardi Gras Sunday

Religion is serious business. It's no joking matter. We're talking about people lives. People's deaths. What they hold nearest and dearest. What motivates them in this life. The thoughts that drive them, move them.

Doctor, you've got to help me; I can't stop thinking I'm a goat. I see. And how long have you had this problem? Ever since I was a kid?

But seriously... this Lent we're going deep into our souls. We're going to excavate our unconscious emotional programming. We're going to talk about mysticism and saints. Like Mahatma Gandhi. *Did you know? Mahatma Gandhi walked barefoot everywhere, to the point that the soles of his feet became quite thick and hard. Being a spiritual person, he ate very little and often fasted. As a result, he was quite thin and frail. Furthermore, due to his diet, he ended up with very bad breath. Therefore, he came to be known as a super callused, fragile mystic plagued with halitosis.*

Yes, we're going to be talking about ego this Lent. We going to study scripture, like this from Genesis.

Eve, in the garden of Eden, said, "God I have a problem. It's a beautiful garden, but I'm lonely and I'm sick of eating apples." "Okay", God said, "I'll create a man for you". Eve said: "what's a man?" "He's a creature with aggressive tendencies and an enormous ego who doesn't listen and gets lost a lot, but he's big and strong, he can open jars and hunt animals, and he's fun." "sounds great!", said Eve. "There's just one other thing". God said. "He's going to want to believe I made him first."

"I'm lonely" Adam told God in the Garden of Eden. "I need to have someone around for company." "Okay", replied God, "I'll give you the perfect companion. She is beautiful, intelligent, and gracious, she'll cook and clean and never say a cross word." "Sounds great" Adam said, "But what's she going to cost?" "An arm and a leg. "answered God. "That's pretty steep." Replied Adam. "What can I get for a rib?"

Adam and Eve had the perfect marriage. He didn't have to listen to her talk about men she knew before him, and she didn't have to put up with his mother.

Yes...talking about religion... oh yes... and we're going to go where liberal Christians are loath to go... to talk of death... oh yes we are. At Mayflower we are not afraid to talk about death.

So this lowan died and went to heaven. St. Peter said, "Before I let you in, you have to pass a test." "Oh no!" said the lowan. St Peter said, "Don't worry. This this is easy. Just answer this question: Who was God's son?" The lowan thought. Finally, she said, "Andy!" St. Pater said, "Andy?" The lowan said, "We sang it in church: Andy walks with me, Andy talks with me, Andy tells me I am his own."

A woman dies and goes to heaven, and St Peter takes her on a tour of heaven. They pass a pit where there are people gnashing their teeth and wailing, and the woman says, "who's down there?" ST. Peter says, "Oh, those are the Catholics who ate meat on Fridays." They walk a little farther and there is another pit with more groaning and wailing, and she says, "Okay, who's down there?" ST. Peter answers, "Those are the Baptists who went to dances." And a little farther along, there is another pit and people down there gnashing their teeth and crying and ripping their garments, and she says, "And those people?" And St. Peter says, "Those are the Episcopalians who ate their salads with their dessert forks."

Madame fortune teller, tell me: Are there golf courses in heaven?" I have good news, and I have bad news." What's the good news? The good news is that the golf courses in heaven are beautiful beyond anything you could imagine!" "That's wonderful." And you'll be teeing off at 8:30 tomorrow morning."

Oh religion... And music... oh my, what would religion be without music?

The organ is the instrument of worship, for in its sounding we sense the majesty of God and in its ending we know the grace of God..

Oh music... *Why did Beethoven kill the chicken? It kept saying: Bach, Bach, Bach*

And why couldn't Mozart find his teacher? Because he was Haydn.

What do you call a guy who hangs out with musicians? A drummer. Why are orchestra intermissions limited to 20 minutes? So you don't have to retrain the drummers.

Let's talk about the sopranos now...

How many sopranos does it take to change a lightbulb? Two. One to hold the diet cola and the other to get her accompanist to do it. How many sopranos does it take to change a lightbulb? Four. One to change the bulb and three to pull the chair out from under her.

Oops.. got a little carried away there...

Yes, religion is serious business... And we must be so careful that we don't offend and we appreciate all the different vocations, all the professions God calls people too, appreciate the differences....

A surgeon, an engineer, and a lawyer were arguing about which profession was the oldest, and the doctor said, "Well, on the sixth day of Creation, God took a rib from Adam, so surgery is the oldest profession." The engineer said, "But, before that, God created the heavens and earth from chaos, so engineering is the oldest profession." And the lawyer said, "Yes, but who do you think created the chaos?"

Speaking of engineers... how do you torture an engineer? Tie her to a chair, stand in front of her, and fold up a road map the wrong way.

The optimist sees a glass that's half full. The pessimist sees a glass that's half empty. An engineer sees a glass that's twice as big as it needs to be.

I digress... religion is serious business... and we must be so careful that we don't offend and we appreciate all the different religions and denominations, appreciate the differences....

A sign at the Unitarian Church said: Bible study at 7:00—bring your bible and a pair of scissors.

Why are unitarians such bad singers? Because they're always reading ahead in the hymnal to see if they agree with it.

What do you get when you cross a Lutheran and a Buddhist? Someone who sits up all night worrying about nothing.

God calls up the Pope. "I've got some good news and some bad news." God says, "I've decided that there should be one church one religion. No more confusion." The pope says, "that's wonderful." God says, "the bad news is, I'm calling from Mecca."

So two bees ran into each other. One asked the other how things were going. The second bee said, "Really bad. Too much rain. No flowers or pollen." The first bee said, "Here's what you do. Just fly down five blocks and turn left and keep going until you see all the cars. There's bar mitzvah going on, and there are all kinds of fresh flowers and fresh fruit. Just wear a yarmulke so they don't think you're a WASP.

How many Lutherans does it take to change a lightbulb? Five. One to screw in the new bulb and four to talk about how much they'll miss the old one.

How many Amish does it take to change a lightbulb? What's a light bulb?

How many charismatic Pentecostals does it take to change a lightbulb? Hard to tell. All their hands are in the air already.

How many unitarians does it take to change a light bulb? We believe that incandescent, fluorescent, tinted, or three-way are equally valid paths to light , and if, in your journey, you have felt the need to change your lightbulb, we are holding a lightbulb service on Sunday at which you're welcome to recite a poem or perform a dance about luminescence.

And of course, the most important thing in religion, is ritual. Teaching the rituals of the faith... And I have a very inspirational story about this, the last story of my sermon on this Sunday morning.

A minister skips services one Sunday to go bear hunting in the mountains. As he turns the corner along the path, he and a bear collide. The minister stumbles backwards, slips off the trail, and begins tumbling down the mountain with the bear in hot pursuit. Finally, the minister crashes into a a boulder, sending his rifle flying in one direction and breaking both of his legs. The minister is lying there; he's lost his gun and the bear is coming closer. So he cries out in desperation, "Lord, I repent of all I've done. Please make this bear a Christian." The bear skids to a halt at the minister's feet, falls to its knees, clasps its paws together and says "Lord, I do thank you for the food I am about to receive."

In the book of Ecclesiastes, it is written there is a time to weep and a time to laugh. So, what's it been, church?! A time to laugh or a time to weep or a time to groan?....

IN this cold dark time of the year, we need more light bulb jokes. IN this cold and dark time in our nation's history, we need more light bulb jokes....

How many Minnesotans does it take to change a lightbulb? Ten. One to change the bulb and 9 to apologize for it being out.

How many narcissists does it take to change a lightbulb? One. She holds the bulb while the world revolves around her.

How many poets does it take to change a lightbulb? Two One to look at the bulb and think of his mother and one to stand at the window and watch the rain...

How many people with PMS does it take to change a lightbulb? Six. Why? It just does, okay?

How many 16 year olds does it take to change a light bulb? What EVER!