

## **R018 - What the Seminar Series –“Where Work Meets Faith” – taught me.**

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**All.** No person is without a God story. Every person has a God story. Those who call themselves atheist or agnostic, I ask if they have ever experienced a “caring presence” outside of themselves. Atheists and agnostics have told me they believe in a caring presence outside of themselves. There is no person who has not related such a story to me. The human spirit seeks “That which they value the most for the common good”, or a “caring presence”, or God. All three may be used interchangeably to get at the essence of what ultimately is a God story.

**Stop gap.** Some who believe in essence of God may invoke a stop gap and not publicly share their story, though they may share it with me in private. I am equally inspired by their private stories as well as those who do present in the Series. The stop gap acts like a fuse or circuit breaker. Some can overcome the stop gap. If one man can do it, another man can do it.

**Integration.** One man began a private story by saying “Before God I am an honest man.” That man integrated his God story with his life. That phrase changed my life as I began to use it publicly on special occasions of most importance as a witness to God. It is no small thing to integrate God into an entire life. The profound humility is to say “Before God I am an honest man.” Such a man has fear of God... while moving into God’s abundance if you will.

**Tears.** God brought me to tears most of the time while interviewing presenters. The

love of God, and God’s love back, usually found in abundance stories, extreme value of selfless giving, is heroic to me. I cry.

**Blind.** Some righteous ones seldom believe they have a story. Though I am amazed, they wonder if anything is there. They are living proof. Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Their self is burning away. God is growing brighter.

**Palpable Compassion.** The deeper one’s sacramental life, the deeper one’s compassion for others. Compassion is palpable when it just oozes out. That sacramental assist is very real. Just listen to the devotions of presenters. More than any other sign, compassion is the water mark of God.

**God.** God is great and greatly to be praised. Once I wept standing outside in subzero weather while hearing the story of a presenter. No one ever asked to hear her God story before. No one ever heard her God story before. Such humility. She emailed me later while preparing for her presentation saying “I am afraid to speak, but I will not let my fear keep me from speaking. I have an awesome God!” She broke through the stop gap.

**Preciousness.** I set out to discover God in the lives of ordinary people. I developed a protocol to find the God part in a presenter’s life, out of the world part of the presenter’s life, in such a way that it could be seen and be understandable. Doing so, I found a preciousness of God at work in the lives of ordinary people like us.

The series is audience described as

“Inspiring and practical.”

**Sample.** My sample consisted of believers who consented to present. Most of my sample came from daily mass goers. When I did market research I asked what made them present. 4 out of 5 said they believed God called them to present. The Holy Spirit is at work. As of 12/6/17, loquate.tv has had over 140 presenters in videos collected over a seven year period from 3 hub parish locations. Thanks to help from Dennis and Jane Galligani of St. Edward the Confessor in Dana Point, California and from Fr. Carl Morello of St. Giles in Oak Park, Illinois, they too collected and contributed some amazing stories to Loquate.tv. We received presentations from presenters from more than 35 different churches, usually Catholic parishes.

I am deeply grateful to Fr. Britto Berchmans, my Pastor, for supporting and encouraging me. He is the one who suggested making the Series practical with work tips. I am grateful to the St. Paul of the Cross Mens Club for mentoring me through the early part of the struggle to birth the Series.

**Sticky Information.** Most of all I am grateful to the presenters. They gave me sticky information. For example my first presenter said he had just retired. Every day in retirement he said he tried to give witness to beauty or give candy to someone. By giving candy he meant giving some form of kindness to another. I thought, I don't know how I will use that information, but it was sticky. Today I can remember all the sticky information. It stuck and every presenter had some. Not a

day goes by that I don't use something I learned from them. What I learned was to such a degree that my spirituality is incomplete without those around me.

**Holy Spirit.** The audience is in the Holy Spirit as well. My wife, Mary Ann, asks the best questions often in the Series. Her kindness and direction to the heart of the matter, warms the whole room. On more than one occasion the Holy Spirit fills the room with questions like hers. With three separately preparing presenters, occasionally some evenings become a symphony from on high, from the unplanned complementarity of the topics to the inspired audience participation. On those nights everyone present realizes no human person could ever put this together. Even on freezing, rainy nights, when few attended, Mary Ann was always there. Without her always there for me, I could never have done this work, my work, our work, “Where Work Meets Faith.”

**The second half.** The second half of the evening was as important as the first half. After the typically 3 presenters completed their presentations in the first hour of the evening, in the next hour I would invite each person present to talk to their neighbor, to express something that stood out for you, to move about the room, to be free to ask more questions of the presenters. During this second half of the evening, the room was abuzz. The Holy Spirit was connecting the human spirit with stories. Sometimes we would have to flick the lights to get people to leave.

**Tragedies.** There were tragedies in our parish, sudden death of a spouse in a young loving couple, unexpected death of a child,

tragic illness striking an innocent person, nothing any other parish has not seen. Having a public forum for the outcome of those tragedies was unusual. It happened this way. One presenter told me he wanted to talk about the outcome of his tragedy. I did not publicize that in promoting his presentation, but he did talk about it. It was a watershed moment. The local meaning of suffering was poignant because the true meaning of Christ's life was in his life too. There was a local meaning to suffering in the image of Christ. Since then many relevant, resolution stories have come forth on their own in due time from the Series. The sequel resolution stories just came about. By grace people trusted at first me and then presented to the world. The common thread was the love of God that was so existent in the lives of the survivors. Their triumphant cross inspired many. God is real and alive, a caring presence, beyond compare, there for us when we need Him the most. As St. Faustina said: "Suffering is the greatest treasure on earth; it purifies the soul."

**The Question.** I set out to get 100 stories. I believed that after 100 stories, something would happen. I could not tell what would happen, but interiorly I believed something would happen. We all knew that the information was taking us in a direction. A question first articulated by Dennis Galligani has always been, now that we have heard these stories, what next?

**The Answer.** The answer came after 5 years. After we had about 100 stories, we began the first Work Meets Faith small group – *Connecting the human spirit, through stories!* The reason Christ is unknown is simple. True commitment to

the common good is so lacking today that the norm is rarely to commit. If I am not committed to you, you cannot see Christ in me. Only when I am committed to you, do you see Christ in me.

### **“Miracles, First Hand”**

Today 6-19-20 as I look back on the series, over half of the stories told were “Miracles, First Hand.” Our society was so repressive that no one spoke of these as Miracles. The miracle stories were the ones that made me cry. Hear them all at [Loquate.tv](http://Loquate.tv). Click “[experience of God](#)” for presentations that made me cry.

**About Loquate** *Loquate builds an interdependence that is based on the Spirit. It is a charitable center for peace that uses technology for intentional community building. Its core competence is community building around functional domains of good using free Smart® technology. Its process uniquely relies only on changing oneself, and can be replicated elsewhere to build community. Major charitable support comes from those who believe in its work in “unity for all.”*

**About the family** *The family is the greatest socializing force on earth. Designated as a family resource outside of our family, a Work Meets Faith small group builds community thru Smart® technology. This model may be applied everywhere especially to our families.*

*Work Meets Faith small groups bring happiness or joy to its members, and sense of community to every group of which they are a part. Thru commitment for life and action, the least bring God centered sense of community as peace on earth in “unity for all.”*

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