

Monk Malloy, Wake Service, March 3, 2015

A couple weeks ago Father Jim Connelly, the Superior of Holy Cross House, our health care and retirement facility where Father Ted lived for a number of years, called me and a number of other of Ted's close friends and said, "The end is near. If you want to have a last, final conversation with him, you better do it quickly."

I knew that I'd be traveling, and so I was a little worried about when was the best time. When Melanie came back, she said to Joan, my assistant, "He's in the office. We never thought he would come back here."

So I thought I would go visit him there. But then somebody came to visit me and I wasn't able to catch him there. So I went over to Holy Cross House. I went up to his room; the television was on but there was nobody there.

So one of the nurses said, "Follow me."

So we went down to the first floor and out into this bubble, which was the approved place for smokers. Now, you have to know that this is not enclosed, as far as walls. And so there was a gigantic heater, and Ted was wearing a hat, and three levels of clothes and blankets on his feet. And he had a stogie in his mouth.

And he was puffing away. But it wasn't lit. And I didn't know whether I should tell him or not. *(laughter)*

A little later, another resident of Holy Cross House came by, and he wanted to smoke a cigarette.

He, too, was close to 90. So, who am I to give them a word of reproach?

He said, "You know, don't worry about me. I can't hear anything." *(laughter)*

So he just watched us the whole time.

About halfway through our conversation, which was very personal, I thought maybe I should tell Ted his cigar was not lit.

So this guy said, "I have a lighter."

So then there was a comedy of errors. *(laughter)* The guy would light the thing, Ted would lean over, and the wind from the heater would blow it out every time. Finally, Ted was satisfied and went puffing away.

I said, "Ted, what have you been thinking about?"

He said, "Eternity."

He said, "The phrase that keeps coming to my mind 'no eye has seen, nor ear heard what God has in store for those who love Him."

I was blown away, of course.

And I recognized at that point that he knew that he would die soon and that he was full of utter gratefulness for his life and for all the gifts he enjoyed along the way.

I said, "Let's talk about people"

And we started with Ned Joyce, who he often described as his best friend in his whole life.

For 35 years they were colleagues, and friends, and companions. Ted as president, Ned Joyce as executive vice president.

You couldn't find two people, personality-wise who were any more different: their politics, their ecclesiology, all different.

But Ted was proud that he said "we never had a fight." I think that was influenced by the fact Ted had the last word, but who am I to say.

For those of you who had the chance to read the wonderful book *Travels with Ted and Ned*, I always wondered what the book would have included if it had been *Travels with Ned and Ted*, but we'll never know.

He talked about Helen Hosinski, his secretary/assistant, whose gnarled hands didn't prevent her, before computers, from getting everything done. Taking dictation, making sure that she could prevent the wrong people from getting access. Organizing his schedule, and otherwise making his life easier. Ted used to say, "We're just figure heads. It's the women of Notre Dame like Helen who really run the place." And that, of course, is very true.

We talked about Ed Stepan, who became the first chair of the Board of Trustees in its modern version, who wrote the Constitutions and the Bylaws of the University in the transition from Holy Cross ownership to a shared responsibility on the board of fellows and on the board of trustees which is primarily lay. Notre Dame would have never been as successful if this dramatic transformation had not taken place. The skill, the enthusiasm, the generosity of so many trustees through the years has been transformative for Notre Dame.

And a lot of that goes back to Ted's doctoral dissertation at Catholic University on the role of the laity in the modern church. Ted was always open to new ideas and new perspectives, including new structures.

Ted was very thankful for the wonderful care that he received at Holy Cross House. From the doctors and the nurses and his companions there, his fellow Holy Cross religious. Shortly before he died, around lunchtime, they anointed him, and he was able to say words of thanksgiving to the whole community assembled there. What a gift they were to him.

Melanie Chapleau. How could we describe what Melanie was to Ted? She ordered his life. She was able to make sure that he was attended to as he went through the declines in his health. She became a weightlifter when he had to get in and out of wheelchairs and in and out of cars and all those sorts of things. She represents all the best of what the staff are like at Notre Dame.

Marty Ogren and the drivers who took him everywhere. The police/security department who were always on call in a sense when he had to go from point A to point B. They were generous. And he would always give them a blessing at the end, no matter what their religious heritage. Ted was appreciative at the end of his life of all those who had been so generous to him along the way.

If you've read the obituaries, you know that his autobiography starts rather simply. Upstate New York. A loving, Catholic family. Thinks he wants to be a priest in grade school. Too young. In high school he sees a group of Holy Cross religious giving admission in his parish. He says, "That's the group I want to belong to." He's accepted, comes, goes through formation, and the next thing you know, he's studying in Rome as a Gregorian. And fortuitously, it helped him become a linguist, which in so many of the things he did later was a great asset.

But then before World War II breaks out he was able to get back to the States, gets ordained, and goes and does his doctorate at Catholic University.

He comes back. We all know the stories of wanting to be a Navy chaplain. He comes back and gets assigned to be the rector of Farley Hall, to be the chaplain for Vetville, where all those returning veterans and their spouses or about-to-be spouses and children. He loved it. It allowed him to be a pastor in the full sense of the term.

Then he gets appointed head of the theology department. Writes textbooks. And then he made that quick jump and became executive vice president.

Because of the canon law requirements of the day, when Father John Cavanaugh, who was both president and superior, had to step down, Ted became his successor. He talks about it was just a kind of obedience. You go the chapel, they give you your obedience, somebody gave you the keys and that was it.

Notre Dame didn't really have a budget those days. He didn't even know how to turn the lights on. But what a transformative effect he had, right from the beginning.

His aspirations were high, but the resources were low. And so one of the things inevitably he had to be a proclaimer of what Notre Dame could be. The Ford Foundation had seed grants which became pivotal for Notre Dame. And through the years we began to accumulate the capital necessary to become a great university.

Once Ted asked me and a group of people, on the basis of his experience working on nuclear disarmament and peace issues, if we would form a little committee to think about how we could form an institute for peace studies. We thought like most academic things, it would last about a year. We had one meeting. Ted was invited to give a talk in San Diego about his dream of a peace institute. After it was all over, a woman came up he had never met before, and she said, "How much would it cost?" He says, "Who are you?" He said, "I don't know, but I can find out for you." So she gave him her card. Joan Kroc, it said. As he found out soon, the inheritor of the McDonald's fortune.

We came back. We had five meetings in five days. We sent her a prospectus. He said it was going to take "six or seven million dollars. We'll be happy to come out and meet with you." She said, "That won't be necessary. I'll send it to you in the overnight mail." He went, "What?" (*laughter*)

And then, between the time she sent it, and when we were ready to cash it in, it accrued by \$100,000. So, we offered to send a \$100,000 back. And she said, "Because you've been so honest, you can keep it." And that was the beginning of an extraordinary relationship with someone who was not Catholic, was not very active in church life, but wanted to be a generous person in every possible way.

One of Ted's things, if he had to chose where to die, would have been, I think, to be celebrating Mass in the chapel at Land O'Lakes. He loved to go there at the end of the academic year to fish, to read, to be himself in nature in this aquatic research facility that was facilitated by the Hank family and so many others. He was at home there.

When I was having my last meeting with him, I said, "Did you ever hear the rumor that when you were out fishing and you couldn't see anymore, that somebody in a wetsuit would go down below the boat and put the fish on the line?" He said, "No!" (*laughter*) That couldn't possibly be true."

One of the most extraordinary things about Ted Hesburgh was his interest in civil and human rights. When he was appointed to the Civil Rights Commission by President Eisenhower, and re-upped and made the head of the group by President Nixon, he was somebody that came from a background that did not have much personal experience in dealing with the reality of this issue, this great scourge on American life. But he was a quick learner and somebody who believed deeply about civil and human rights in every possible fashion.

And so one of the most iconic pictures of him, that many of us have seen, is holding hands, or locking arms, with Martin Luther King Jr. and several others up at Soldier Field in Chicago singing "We Shall Overcome."

He went from somebody without much experience in this important issue in our common life to somebody responsible, in a sense, for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Hard to explain it, but many times he played a providential kind of role in the events of our time.

Ted was a polymath. A quick learner. He wasn't so much a specialist in any one thing, but he learned about science because it was important. He learned about civil rights because how else could he effectively play that role, and he learned one time he decided enough about Islam. So he read a passage on an oiler, got a bunch of books and simply spent the whole time reading about Islam and celebrating Mass for the people on the crew. That was the type of person that Ted Hesburgh was. Find the issue, get invited by presidents and popes, and try to make a difference.

He had a great friendship with Pope Paul VI. And Pope Paul and he would gather periodically and exchange gifts close to their own hearts. And eventually, Pope Paul asked him to found an ecumenical institute in the Holy Land. Originally it was in Jordan, now it's sitting in Jerusalem looking into Bethlehem. It was one of the places that was closest to Ted's heart. And his goal in life was to see the antagonist in the Holy Land gather for how ever long it took at Tantur and come up with a peace plan that would bring final and lasting peace to the region. That's a wonderful dream, even to this day.

Ted was a daredevil. He liked challenges. Once I was with him in Jericho, reportedly the oldest city in the world. It was about 120 in the shade, and Ted, I think, was 82. I said, "We can just look at it, Ted." "No, no. We're going to the top." We went up there, both of us sweating, but not holding back from taking the risk and experiencing the fullness of that particular place.

He celebrated Mass in a submarine between California and Hawaii, and on aircraft carriers. He went to Antarctica. And then he flew in a supersonic transport, which was one of the most important items in his office area. But his great dream in life was to be the first priest to celebrate Mass in outer space as an astronaut. He and Walter Conkrite were lined up, but then the tragedy of the Challenger disaster happened, and he was never able to fulfill that dream.

Ted was in a hundred countries, I think. One time I was able to get to Tibet, and he said, "I'm so envious of you. I've only been to Nepal and Afghanistan and China and India, but I've never been to Tibet." I said, "Too bad, Ted." (*laughter*)

One of Ted's great lines, "A Catholic university is a place where the Church does its thinking." He really meant it. Totally devoted to the Church, but wanting us to be a full-fledged university in every sense of the term. To appropriately acknowledge

faculty pejoratives, to establish institutes and centers that were close to our Catholic mission and identity, to celebrate the achievements of the members the Congregation of Holy Cross.

I used to have lunch with Ted every couple of weeks, sometimes with Tim O'Meara, our former provost, Bill Sexton and others who served in the administration. I used to say to people that if you wanted to know what we talked about I'd have to kill you. But we had great conversations, and one of the things we talked about frequently was our great admiration and regard for Father John Jenkins, our contemporary president. How happy we were that someone of great talent and enthusiasm and holiness was serving in succession to us. For me, one of the iconic moments in my time at Notre Dame was when the two of us put our hands on John's shoulders at his inauguration and said a prayer of blessing. What a privilege that was as we passed the mantle on.

Finally, Ted was a man of prayer. He celebrated Mass every day, except one or two times when it was impossible. He carried a black bag everywhere he went, which had all the elements that were necessary to celebrate Mass. He would invite Russian politicians and scientists to come to Mass. He would invite people of other religious faiths. He would invite atheists or whoever. And generally they always said yes, and they went away fully embracing a kind of sense of God's presence in their life.

He was the first priest to celebrate Mass in Lambeth Palace, which is the headquarters of the Archbishop of Canterbury, at that time George Carey. The first Mass there from the time of the Reformation, right near where Thomas Cranmer wrote the *Book of Common Prayer*, and little bit away from where Thomas More was tried and hung. What a dramatic moment that was for both of us.

One time on one of his birthdays we celebrated Mass right on the Sea of Galilee in a hotel in a room with a Christian-Arab driver. And all I could think of, here was Ted, right next to where Jesus would have been doing the same thing in His own ministry.

He celebrated the Holy Office. He prayed the Rosary. He visited the Grotto. He tried to be a pastor to anyone who came into his presence. When he lost his eyesight, it had the blessing that he could then invite the people, undergraduate students particularly, to come and read for him. And they had the concrete experience of the person in the flesh, so to speak.

When I left him on that last meeting, I asked him to bless me, which he did, graciously.

Now I want to say on behalf of all of us, Father Ted Hesburgh, C.S.C.

You have been a great and holy priest.

You have been our pastor here at Notre Dame as you have for the country and the world.

Now, go to God, and may you rest in peace.