



We must learn to laugh at ourselves.
(Repeat upon request.)

As a young priest, I was asked by a funeral director to hold a graveside service for a derelict man, who had died while traveling through our area. The funeral was held well out into the countryside.

This man would be the first to be laid to rest at a new cemetery. I was not familiar with the backwoods area and soon became lost. I finally arrived, an hour late. I noticed the crew and backhoe, but the funeral director and hearse had departed. The workers had stopped to eat their lunch.

I apologized to the workers for my tardiness (*they were nonchalant at my admission*) and continued their meal.

I stepped up to the side of the open grave, to find the vault lid already in place. I assured the workers that I would not hold them for long, but that this was the proper thing to do. So, the workers gathered around, still munching on their lunch.

I poured out my heart and soul. As I preached, the workers began to say, "***Amen! Praise the Lord and Glory!***" (*They must have been Baptists.*) I began with Genesis and went all the way to Revelation. Finally, I closed in prayer and finished.

As I was walking to my car, I felt that I had done my duty and departed with a renewed sense of purpose and dedication. Opening the door of my car, I began to remove my coat. It was then I heard one of the workers say to the others.....

"I've been put'n in septic tanks for 20 years. Ain't never seen or heard nothing like this before!"

As vacation time begins, enjoy these days of summer. AND: remember to smile, even if at one-self!

Sincerely and in Him, fr.t.