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AN OLD ITALIAN’S TOMATO GARDEN

An old Italian lived alone in New Jersey. He wanted to plant his annual tomato garden, but it was very difficult work, as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament.

Dear Vincent,
I am feeling pretty sad because it looks like I won’t be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I’m just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here my troubles would be over. I know you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days.
Love, Papa

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

Dear Papa,
Don’t dig up that garden. That’s where the bodies are buried.
Love, Vinnie

At 4 a.m. the next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from his son.

Dear Papa,
Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That’s the best I could do under the circumstances.
Love, Vinnie

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**The Atheist**

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods, admiring all that the “accident of evolution” had created. “What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals he said to himself.

As he was walking alongside the river he heard a rustling in the bushes behind him. As he turned to look, he saw a 7’ grizzly charging toward him. He ran as fast as he could up the path. He looked over his shoulder and saw the bear was closing on him. He tried to run even faster, he was so scared that tears were streaming down his cheeks. His heart was pumping frantically as he tried to run even faster. Just then he tripped on a root and fell to the ground. As he turned to get up, he saw the bear right on top of him with his paw raised to kill him.

At that instant he cried out, “Oh my God.” Suddenly time stopped – the bear froze, the forest was silent, the river stopped flowing, and a bright light shown on the man. The a voice came out of the sky saying, “For years you denied my existence and taught others that I don’t exist. You even credit my creation to a cosmic accident as you take my name in vain. And now do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I now to count you as a believer?”

The atheist, ever so proud, looked into the light and said, “It would be rather hypocritical of me to ask to be a Christian after all these years, but could you make the bear a Christian?”

“Very well,” said the voice. The light went out, the river started flowing again, the sounds of the forest started up, and the bear put down his paw. Then the bear knelt down, bowed his head and said, “Lord, I thank you for this food which I am about to receive.”

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**Do You Know Jesus Christ?**

An old nun who was living in a convent next to a construction site noticed the coarse language of the workers and decided to spend some time with them to correct their ways.

She decided she would take her lunch, sit with the workers and talk with them.

She put her sandwich in a brown bag and walked over to the spot where the men were eating. Sporting a big smile, she walked up to the group and asked: “And do you men know Jesus Christ?”

They shook their heads and looked at each other… somewhat confused.

Then one of the workers looked up into the steelworks and yelled out, “Anybody up there know Jesus Christ?”

One of the steelworkers yelled down, “Why?”

The worker yelled back, “Cause his wife’s here with his lunch.”

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EXODUS 14

A boy was sitting on a park bench with one hand resting on an open Bible. He was loudly exclaiming his praise to God. “Hallelujah! Hallelujah! God is great!” he yelled without worrying whether anyone heard him or not.

Shortly after, along came a man who had recently completed some studies at a local university. Feeling himself very enlightened in the ways of truth and very eager to show this enlightenment, he asked the boy about the source of his joy.

“Hey” asked the boy in return with a bright laugh, “Don’t you have any idea what God is able to do? I just read that God opened up the waves of the Red Sea and led the whole nation of Israel right through the middle.”

The enlightened man laughed lightly, sat down next to the boy and began to try to open his eyes to the “realities” of the miracles of the Bible. “That can all be very easily explained. Modern scholarship has shown that the Red Sea in that area was only 10-inches deep at that time. It was no problem for the Israelites to wade across.”

The boy was stunned. His eyes wandered from the man back to the Bible laying open in his lap. The man, content that he had enlightened a poor, naive young person to the finer points of scientific insight, turned to go.

Scarcely had he taken two steps when the boy began to rejoice and praise louder than before. The man turned to ask the reason for this resumed jubilation.

“Wow!” exclaimed the boy happily, “God is greater than I thought! Not only did He lead the whole nation of Israel through the Red Sea, He topped it off by drowning the whole Egyptian army in 10-inches of water!”

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**Fried Chicken**

Our teacher asked us what our favorite animal was, and I said, “Fried chicken.”

She said I wasn’t funny, but she couldn’t have been right, because everyone else in the class laughed. My parents told me to always be truthful and honest, and I am. Fried chicken is my favorite animal.

I told my dad what happened, and he said my teacher was probably a member of PETA. He said they love animals very much. I do, too. Especially chicken, pork and beef. Anyway, my teacher sent me to the principal’s office. I told him what happened, and he laughed, too. Then he told me not to do it again.

The next day in class my teacher asked me what my favorite live animal was. I told her it was chicken. She asked me why, just like she’d asked the other children. So I told her it was because you could make them into fried chicken. She sent me back to the principal’s office again. He laughed, and told me not to do it again.

I don’t understand. My parents taught me to be honest, but my teacher doesn’t like it when I am.

Today, my teacher asked us to tell her what famous person we admire most. I told her, “Colonel Sanders.”

Guess where I am now...
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**LITTLE OLD LADY**

A few years ago, my (wife/husband/friend) and I went to Rome on a Youth Pilgrimage. We were visiting one of the major churches during a time of restoration. There was scaffolding all around as the frescos were being worked on and a couple of men were working on the fresco on the ceiling.

We noticed a little Italian lady enter, genuflect, enter the pew, and begin to say the rosary. Then we heard a voice say, “Little old lady, this isa Jesus. I wanna to talk with you.”

The lady was deep in prayer and did not respond.

Then we heard a little louder, “Little old lady, this isa Jesus. I wanna to talk with you.”

Still no response.

Then a third time, louder still, “Little old lady, this isa Jesus. I wanna to talk with you.”

Then the lady looked up and shouted, “Keepa quiet sonny, I’m talking to your momma!”

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**NOVENA**

There was a young Catholic man who went into the home renovation business. He had previously worked for a house building company, but decided to go out on his own. He was in the business for a while when he decided it was time to go to confession. One of the sins he confessed was that he was stealing lumber.

Of course the priest admonished him for doing that and gave him his penance – an Our Father and 3 Hail Marys.

A month later, the young man was back in confession and again confessed that he was stealing lumber.

The priest asked him, “Didn’t you confess that the last time you were here.”

“Yes Father,” the young man said, “it’s sort of becoming a habit.”

The priest decided he needed to give the young man a harsher penance so he said, “Do you know how to make a Novena?”

“No Father, I don’t.” said the young man, “But if you can get me the plans, I know where I can get some lumber.”

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**PARROT**

There was a mild-mannered pastor who just retired and was still living at the same parish rectory where he had been pastor many years.

Friends noticed he seemed a bit depressed and unsure what to do with himself. So, they suggested he get a pet, thinking he’d want a dog or cat. So, the retired Pastor went to a local pet store. Saw a for sale sign for exotic parrots. The Pastor had a particular weakness for buying things on sale, so he purchased a parrot.

Now, the parrot had previously been owned by someone else and had a bad attitude and worse vocabulary. Every other word was a curse word.

Fr. tried very hard to change the bird’s attitude and was constantly saying polite words, playing soft music, anything he could think of. Nothing worked. One day in a moment of desperation, he put the parrot in the freezer.

For a few moments he heard the bird squawking and kicking and screaming, and then, suddenly, there was quiet. Fr. got frightened that he might have actually hurt the bird and quickly opened the freezer door.

The parrot calmly stepped out onto his extended arm and said: “I’m sorry that I might have offended you with my language and actions and sincerely ask for your forgiveness. I will endeavor to correct my behavior.”

Fr. was astounded at the bird’s change in attitude and was about to ask what had changed him. Before he could ask, the parrot looked back toward the freezer and said, “May I ask what the chicken did?”

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**THE PHONE CALL**

While on vacation in Rome, I noticed a marble column in St. Peter's with a golden telephone on it. As a young priest passed by, I asked who the telephone was for.

The priest told me it was a direct line to heaven, and if I'd like to call, it would be a thousand dollars. I was amazed, but declined the offer.

Throughout Italy, I kept seeing the same golden telephone on a marble column. At each, I asked about it and the answer was always the same: It was a direct line to heaven and I could call for a thousand dollars.

Then, I traveled to Ireland for the final leg of my trip. I decided to attend Mass at a local village church. When I walked in the door I noticed the golden telephone.

Underneath it there was a sign stating: “DIRECT LINE TO HEAVEN: 25 cents.”

“Father,” I said, “I have been all over Italy and in all the cathedrals I visited, I’ve seen telephones exactly like this one. But the price is always a thousand dollars. Why is it that this one is only 25 cents?”

The priest smiled and said, “Darlin’, you’re in Ireland now. It’s a local call.”
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**THE SHARK**

As I look around at all of you, I’m reminded of the time I was invited to a Bar-B-Q, at the ranch of this very wealthy Texan. He had a huge ranch, thousands and thousands of acres. And on the ranch he had a large, lighted swimming pool in which he kept a shark.

The Texan entertained regularly and sometime during the evening at every party he invited all the guests to the swimming pool. Then he offered this challenge, “If any of you will swim the length of this pool, I will give you one of three things: ten million dollars, half of my ranch, or the hand of my lovely daughter in marriage. But I must warn you; there is a shark in the pool.

Just as he finished saying this there was a big splash. And a man smartly dressed in his evening attire swam the length of the entire pool, chased by the shark. He made it to the end of the pool and climbed out just as the shark thudded into the wall.

“Congratulations,” said the Texan, “You are the first person who has ever done that.” Now what would you like? The ten millions dollars?”

“No thank you,” said the man. “Would you like half of my ranch?” Again the man replied, “No thank you.”

“Ah!” the Texan said, “You want the hand of my daughter in marriage!” Once more the man said, “No thank you.”

“Well what do you want?” asked the Texan. The man replied, “I want the name of the person who pushed me in!”

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