

What kind of house weighs the least? A. lighthouse.

Where did you get that haircut? Did they charge you for the top??

Oh oh, here comes trouble with my bossy sister.

Always followed by the sheepish smile waiting for his audience to groan!

What a guy! Thank you for coming today. We are here to celebrate the ordinariness of Jack's life and the holiness of his life. I choose readings to reflect this. Sirach not only for it's Wisdom learned from youth, but because Wisdom is called a she.

Thessalonians has words for living: "aspire to live a tranquil life, to mind your own affairs and to work with your own hands". Well, Jack wasn't good with the work your hands thing. But he was very good at managing a Howard Johnson!

Jack was a true and faithful servant of God's. He helped where he could being the "family at home" for his friends when they lived out of town. He loved "Mr. Martin" and Mary and Rob. When our cousin, Joan, needed to move to FL to care for her parents, Jack helped her buy a house.

His bonds were tight.

Here are some others. He was a Geraghty by choice!!! He had a long friendship with Terry. He was our family rep at the cousins Doyle family picnics! He belonged to the CBC brotherhood, even sporting a CBC license plate on his walker in later years.

And I think one of the biggest compliments for his life was the worker retention at the Howard Johnson Restaurant. Not much turnover there!!! And all the staff were in love with Jack and Ernie Johansen!!!

In 2017, years after it closed, people came up to us at the iHop, where we ate every Sunday morning, and talked about working with him as dishwasher or waitress. Quite a loyalty!

Jack cared for our mother - or was it the other way around!! Or was it the famous chocolate chip cookies!!! He was the one who took her to the hospital each time until her death. And he was with our dad when he died. As his only sibling, I owed him big time.

There is another piece of wisdom that you may not know about Jack. When he was 19 yrs old, he had a psychotic break. He was very, very sick. He recovered and promised himself not to marry. As he said, "I can't do that to anyone, Moe." Of course he also said that it helped if he wanted to get married, he would call me, hear all the chaos in the back ground and know it was okay to be single!!!

He was the best Uncle. "The only one" as my kids responded to Jack's self praise! They also recall how he would tease at family gatherings that he forgot his wallet or George never brought his wallet. Then he would end up paying the bill. He was the best in so many ways.

So what about Emmaus?? That journeying to recognition ?? Our dementia journey.

Jack and I loved Sarah Community and the residents. They said our table was the loudest with laughter! Then I took him out of his beloved St. Louis. He knew he was going even though my son John and grandson Tim said they were just going to breakfast. Then they continued on to Madison. I still can't believe how much trust Jack had in me. He never fought me. He spent 4 years at Heritage, just 3 mins from me. He had good care and I could see him almost every day.

The staff loved his jokes and playfulness. When he left for in-residence hospice, bundled on a gurney, headed for the ambulance, a small crowd of workers gathered around him and said 1,2,3 “Hit the road Jack and don’t you come back no more, no more” followed by kisses and hand holding. It was a song I heard them sing often to get him to smile and dance around.

He was in hospice only 3 1/2 weeks. And at one point, he was sitting up in bed and I was sitting on the couch at the end of the bed. He looked at me, shrugged his shoulders with a smile, I shrugged back. “Who knows??”

At the end, he took a deep sigh and passed away. I believe/know that he fell into that mysterious, unconditional, ineffable Love we call God. It was his moment of recognition. May it be so for us all.