



I made my weekly trip to the grocery store on Saturday. Our local store has a fairly good wine department and, several times a week, they will have tastings of a number of showcased varieties. A sample now and then helps make grocery shopping a little less tedious.

I have spent time talking with the woman who works there while I sample the wine. Sue is probably in her forties and has never married. She stayed at home to take care of ailing parents and, now that they have passed away, she is alone. She would like nothing more than to meet a nice man and settle down.

Last Saturday Sue told me she has prayed about her future and it is in God's hands now. She has met men that she was interested in getting to know better, but nothing ever has come of it. I told her the story of how Tim and I met, that we had met at our church's carnival. In both my conversation with Sue, and in our post, I left out a few details.

After Mass on the day of the carnival, I walked over to the gambling tent and looked for the person in charge. Someone said his name was John and pointed him out to me. I walked over to introduce myself. I told John that the pastor said they needed help that evening and I was here to work, "Do what you want with me."

His wife was nearby and chuckled. She told me that was the last thing I should be telling her husband. It could lead to something quite unexpected. And, for me, it did. Not only did I work at the carnival that night, I met the man who would become my husband.

"Do what You want with me." I think we often say that to God, but do we really mean it? Many times we qualify that prayer with what we want. Do what You want with me as long as it fits my narrative.

One of my favorite prayers I learned as a child included the line "show me my vocation early in life so that I may do Your holy will." As a teen and young adult, I quickly followed it up with "and help me meet the man that is to become my husband." I wasn't exactly waiting for God to show me what my vocation was. I was offering my suggestions.

Newly married couples are often asked if they want children and how many. The

usual Catholic answer is “we are open to life and would like as many kids as God gives us, at least four or five.” But what if God’s plan is zero?

Another line of that childhood prayer was “please keep us safe and healthy.” But what if that doesn’t happen? Health issues, illness, and accidents can quickly sideline plans for the future.

Early in our marriage we thought we would soon grow our family and have lots of little ones running around our home. It was sometimes painful watching friends and family having children of their own when we could not. But, looking back at that time now, I can see God’s hand in it all. We were able to be present to others in ways we would not have been if we had had our own way.

“Do what You want with me.” That was Mary’s fiat when the angel came with God’s request that she bear His son. Her life was never the same. When we are open to God’s plan for us, our lives will never be either.