

2. Dad is much too much a Catholic to get cremated.

The toilet flushes.

That toilet never stops running. I'll go.

2 exits to fix the toilet.

Father comes back.

They pass each other, unseeing.

4. I don't think Dad was absolute about Catholicism. I remember when I went to Sacred Heart the nuns told us if one member of the family became a priest the whole family was saved so in third grade I thought: I'll take one for the team, and I said: "I want to be a priest."

2 comes back, having jiggled the toilet flusher.

3. Wow.

4. Then Sister Mary Bethel pulls Dad aside at a parent teacher conference and says: "We think Mikey has received *the call*," and Dad said: "Well, is that right?" The next week, I was in public school.

2. Hank Lischer was recruiting me for public school. He said the desks were automatic and the inkwells came up by themselves.

4. It's true, I'm sorry you didn't get to experience that.

They all laugh.

3. All I know is Sister Mary Robert Cecile –

4. We called her Big Bob –

1.

Big Bob!!

5.

Big Bob?

3. Big Bob! – whacked me with a ruler in front of the class for trying to look up her dress, a feat the Lord himself could not accomplish.

2. Nor would He want to.

3. Nor would He want to.

5. Maybe I ended up having the most interest in religion because I never went to Catholic school. I used to shut

myself in my room for days of solitary contemplation.
Dad and I used to go to Mass every week during Lent.
You were all grown up and out of the house.

1. Would Mom go with you to Mass?
4. No, Mom was a Lutheran atheist to the bitter end. She said: "I never understood how there could be a heaven. It would be too heavy and all the bodies would fall down."
5. She used to say: "Man created God as a means of social control. Religion teaches you not to think."
1. Well, I guess I associate religion with stupidity too.
4. Jesus, Ann.
1. Sorry. Well, the religious right anyway.
2. Liberals make the mistake of conflating religion with ignorance, it's an ethical and a tactical error –
5. Could we please not say "liberal" or "conservative" tonight? I'm not in the mood, I'm really not.
2. Sorry.
3. Here, have some Jamison's, you'll feel better.
5. No thanks. I'm going to get some water. Would anyone else like water?

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|------------|------|--------|
| 1. | 2. | 3. |
| No thanks. | Nah. | Uh-uh. |

She gets up and goes offstage to get some water.

Father follows her.

2. Ann, when did you stop going to church?
1. I was taking the pill after I gave birth to Katherine, and I was going to Mass at St. Clement's where she was baptized and I thought, "Well, I'm taking birth control so I'm in mortal sin, and it's hypocritical for me to go to church, I should stay home and read the *New York Times* instead" –
2. Ah, yes the great church of the *New York Times* –
1. All right –