

**6<sup>th</sup> SUN. in EASTER (A-4)** (12:30 & 6:00) **Is God proud or embarrassed by us?**

Tony Campolo, a Christian author, wrote a book with an interesting title: *Following Jesus, without embarrassing God*. It's interesting 'cause so many people say they are followers of Jesus, but dance to a tune that isn't Christ's and are an embarrassment to being apostles. For example, the evangelist of the rapture! Imagine how his peers, his family and his congregation feel! And what's worse, it's the 2<sup>nd</sup> time he's pulled this.

He is the opposite of a hero or she-roe. Heroes and she-roes are people we want to be like. According to Peter, a hero gently witnesses to why one is a person of hope. There's no such thing as a hopeless, despairing, or depressed Christian. It doesn't mean we don't have difficulties. We do. It means we do not let them destroy our spirits. Hopeless, despairing, or depressed Christians are contradictions in terms and an embarrassment to the God of love and Joy.

Real heroes/she-roes have something we want: peace & joy! We want to be with them and like them. We dress like them, and wear our hair like them (if they have hair). We imitate their walk, talk, and acts. Teens have posters of their heroes/she-roes. Adults have framed photos or statues of them. The religious have relics. Why? We feel secure.

So, let me ask: Is Christ our hero or not? If yes, then, do we act like him? Are we walking, talking and serving like him? "If you love me you will keep my commandments," Christ said. "I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you." This means that he will be with us always, even until the end of time. He's assuring his disciples at the Last Supper, and assures us, their descendents, that we have nothing to fear.

One reason why we need heroes and she-roes is because we all have fantasies in which we're the ones who come to save the day for those around us. God wrote that dream of heroism or she-roe-ism our hearts. The Spirit, which Jesus promised to send us, reminds us of this fact.

St. Peter commands “be ready to give testimony to our hope but to do so with gentleness and reverence.” Why would he say that? Because many converts were becoming almost rabid or pushy disciples and Jesus did not want that. He is embarrassed by that. He simply wants people who know who they are, whose they are, and for whom they are here. People who know these things are humble and understanding, not rabid or pushy. Humility and understanding lead to gentleness and reverence.

Are we humble and understanding? Are we gentle and reverent? Or are we rabid and pushy, judgmental and irreverent? The choice is ours. One way leads to being on God’s list of heroes and she-roes. The other way leads to being on the long list of lost and forgotten people. Choose the way less traveled by; it will make all the difference in the world.

Study our hero, Jesus the Christ. Emulate or imitate our hero. Let us walk as he walked and where he walked. Let us look on the world with his eyes, let us love with his heart, and let us always be his hands in the loving service of our brothers and sisters. Only then will God be proud and not embarrassed by us. May the God who is always with us, give us the grace to show how much we love God by showing how much we love our neighbor, making God proud to have created us in God’s image and likeness.