



Sixth Sunday of Easter

How often do you cry these days? I admit that I cry nearly every day, always in response to some heroic act I see featured on tv. When I hear the first responders---the ambulance drivers and EMTs, especially--describe desperately trying to get a patient to the hospital before they die, I can barely watch.

But when they interview the exhausted nurses and doctors, and hear their answers to the inevitable questions about how they are getting through their shifts without breaking down, I long to hear just one of them reference that scripture text we have today from I Peter: *Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope.*

In Catholic New York, I long to hear at least one baptized and confirmed health care hero say, "Well, I'm Catholic. That means I'm never alone. I bring the whole Body of Christ with me when I put on my protective equipment and enter the ward. And, of course, I have all the angels and saints holding me through my shift every day."

In my daily prayer I picture those angels and saints holding parents tight, giving them patience and strength as they face another ALL KIDS ALL DAY marathon. I picture angels guiding and holding every kind of First Responder . The reason for our hope, right in the middle of this terror, is that the Holy Spirit is guiding the researchers and every person placing their precious lives on the line. Where is God in all of this? Right there in the ambulance, right there in the ventilator. God did not make death. That is the reason for our hope.

Do you ever share with anyone the reason for your hope?