



# Sower of Hope

Adam to sin when she encouraged him to also eat the forbidden fruit. Deacon Harold taught that Adam shared the blame for not protecting Eve enough not to fall under the guiles of the serpent. He also brought his discourse on the subject of equality between man and woman. They were created equally in the image of God—equal, but not the same, and with different roles to play. The woman is the heart of the family; the man, the chief protector and servant. The devil targets women as a way to attack the family.

On the Christian role in evangelization: As lay people, our role is not to change minds and convert others but to simply sow the seeds by being faithful to Christ in the way we live our lives. Our goal is not to convert, but to cause others to grow closer in their relationship with Jesus. Only the Holy Spirit can lead man to conversion.

On marriage: Marriage is a covenant and not a contract. A contract involves an exchange of goods. A covenant is a call to intimacy involving a complete and total gift of oneself. The gift of self is in the form of love that is free, fruitful, total and faithful.

On the Catholic Church: Jesus did not found a religion denomination; He established a Church through Peter. All other religions today were founded by someone long after Christ came. Only Jesus claimed to be God and He is the only one whose coming to the



Deacon Harold Burke-Swiers

world was foretold thousands of years before.

On joy and happiness: One can be happy but not joyful. Joy comes from responding to God's will. If you don't do God's will, if you set your mind on the world, you experience death because you cut your-

hear God, silence is necessary. Do not worry so much with what you do but with what you bring.

On humility: Humility is not about us. It begins when the eye of our heart is focused on the Lord. Humility is being thankful to Mary who brought us to God and who has brought us so many graces.

To convey his messages, Deacon Harold made use of personal anecdotes that included his encounters with audiences worldwide. Every now and then, he would ask questions, emote situations theatrically, and stress points with his booming voice filling the entire church.

By the third and concluding session, Deacon Harold recounted his story in relation to his father. It illustrated a miraculous episode showcasing the Divine Mercy and God's forgiveness. I was barely able to keep myself from shedding tears.

As Deacon Harold uttered his last word, we, his audience were on our feet to give him a standing ovation. Father Robert, in response, announced that he has already booked Deacon Harold for next year's Lenten talks.

I have attended numerous talks before by well-meaning and effective speakers but I have not experienced being so awed, touched and fully engaged as I have been listening to Deacon Harold. During those moments when I sat listening to him, I kept wishing that all the people I know who have fallen away from Christ, at least in my orbit, could hear him talk.

For someone who traded his lucrative career for a fulltime missionary work to bring those of us

“Mission” talks always hold a special place in my heart. So, when I saw the wall posters and our parish bulletin announced one that was forthcoming, I made a mental note of the dates they were scheduled to happen. With Fr. Robert's enthusiastic endorsement of this “dynamic” American Catholic evangelist named Deacon Harold Burke-Swiers conducting the talk, my interest in attending peaked many times over.

Anticipation was building up when I arrived with my daughter for the first of this three-night talk series. Chiara did not have my level of enthusiasm but was open enough to attend the first night with me and “see how it goes.” I secretly prayed to the Holy Spirit that it would deliver as per Father Robert's promise just enough to hook my daughter to go the whole nine yards.

The Holy Spirit listened. For three evenings, Deacon Harold touched on subjects that at times are lightning rods for modern-day skeptics or, at other times, are sources of confusion among those who are trying to live their Christian faith. For examples:

On the story of Adam and Eve: A popular notion is that Eve caused

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## PERSPECTIVE...

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more intimately connected to God,  
Deacon Harold is doing extremely  
well.

We live in a period where so  
many no longer believe in God;  
our God who created us and died  
for us out of His infinite love. In  
God's place, we have substituted  
other "gods", where our Holy Trin-  
ity has become "Me, Myself, and I"

to quote Deacon Harold.

Thankfully, there is Deacon Har-  
old and a growing number of God-  
send evangelists like him who light  
our path and give us hope that all is  
not lost.

Writer's Note: Deacon Harold  
is a much-sought after Catholic  
speaker worldwide and the author  
of many bestselling books and  
DVDs. He has a very strong pres-  
ence in social media platforms.

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