



Serving Christ – A Perfect Example of Servanthood

Let me tell you two stories about two men who came from Chicago, USA.

Story Number One:

Chicago's O'Hare International airport is named after one of Chicago's most famous and heroic sons. Butch O'Hare was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier *Lexington* during the Second World War. About ten weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor Butch O'Hare was flying his single engine Grumman Hellcat fighter plane off the Gilbert Islands. He and another pilot were the only ones aloft when O'Hare spotted a group of nine Japanese bombers heading straight for his aircraft carrier, the *Lexington*. O'Hare knew the odds were against him - the other fighter planes on the carrier were refueling and would not have time to take off. It was up to Butch and the other Hellcat to stop the Japanese bombers. The odds were dramatically reduced when Butch discovered the machine guns on the second Hellcat had seized. It was just Butch O'Hare and four minutes between the Japanese bombers and the 2000 crew aboard the *Lexington*.

Butch dove in and started the attack. The crew of the *Lexington* watched as he engaged the Japanese bombers - their guns training in on his Hellcat fighter. With astonishing skill Butch O'Hare emerged victorious, shooting down five of the nine Japanese bombers and badly damaging another. The last three were taken out by planes that managed to get off the decks of the *Lexington* while the air battle raged above them.

President Roosevelt later described Butch O'Hare's actions as "one of the most daring, if not the most daring, single action in the history of combat aviation." Butch was promoted two ranks and designated the US Navy's first "Ace" of World War 2.

Story Number two:

Some years before World War 2, a millionaire lawyer known as "Easy Eddie" was involved in illegal gambling rackets with the notorious Chicago gangster Al Capone. Eddie had the patent rights to the mechanical rabbits used in dog racing and he was brought into the Hawthorne Kennel Club by Capone as a major partner. The races were usually always fixed and although dog racing was illegal Capone and Eddie kept the matter tied up in the courts. This allowed them to continue to run their tracks. When dog racing was finally declared illegal Eddie and Capone simply switched their tracks over to horseracing, which was legal, and continued to fix races and rake in money.

In addition to his race track interests Eddie performed a variety of legal services for the Capone Mob. He looked after mob members arrested for murder, gambling and prostitution and set up elaborate real estate and stock transactions for Capone, himself and other insiders of the gang.

There was however another side to Eddie. Eddie was a father. He had a son and daughters whom he loved dearly, and the wealth he had amassed allowed him to shower everything money could buy upon his beloved children. And in many ways he was a good father. Eddie sought out the best schools for his children and spent lots of time with them attending their school productions and sporting events, and just hanging around together.

But there was one thing Eddie's money couldn't buy - integrity and respectability. Eddie's son finished high school and declared he wanted to go into the naval academy at Annapolis. But to get there you needed more than money. You needed the approval of the congressman for your state.

Eddie decided his son's future was more important than his own. He approached the authorities and indicated he would be willing to testify against Capone. On the basis of Eddie's witness Al Capone went to jail for 11 years and his stranglehold on Chicago was broken. Eddie's son also got into the Annapolis Naval Academy. But for Eddie the price was severe. Capone swore he would kill Eddie and in 1937 Eddie was gunned to death as he drove his car home from work.

I know what you're thinking. What do these two stories have to do with one another? Well, you see, Butch O'Hare was Easy Eddie's son.

Source: ozsermonillustrations.com

A parent's influence impacts the life of a child. Thankfully, we have a Father in heaven who provided us with a perfect example to live by: Jesus.

Scripture

Read John 13:1-17

