

## Preparation for G192 — Heroes

What do you think of first when presented with the term “hero”? Is it a “superhero”? Or does it provoke a bit of cynicism, as in the comment, “*What heroes!?*”?

Or, do you question, as the Rev. Lynn Thomas Strauss does:

“I have often wondered how activists for peace and justice can remain at peace, free within themselves even when they suffer years of imprisonment as political prisoners. Just over a year ago, I visited Robbin Island in South Africa, where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for almost thirty years. I stood in front of his very small jail cell and tried to imagine how he could possibly have gone deeper in his existential freedom and more whole as a person under such horrible restriction of his basic human rights and freedoms.”

Sometimes you might find yourself inspired by the story of someone’s remarkable accomplishment. You might find yourself exclaiming, “That’s amazing!” when you listen to a beautiful piece of music, for example, or contemplate a piece of art. Or you might hear yourself saying, “I would have a hard time doing what he or she does” when you reflect on individuals like Stephen Hawking and Helen Keller. Perhaps you’re awed by the series of hurdles someone has jumped successfully to become the person he/she is. Or maybe you’re overwhelmed by the thought of a person who has done something extraordinary for you.

### Questions

1. A hero is someone who ...
2. Make a list of your childhood heroes/heroines. How did they influence you?
3. Who are your heroes/heroines now? What makes each of them heroic? What do you see in them that sets them apart as heroic? What part of you do they touch?
4. What differences do you notice between your childhood list and your current list of heroes?
5. How are your heroes/heroines present in your life now?