

THIS HOLY messenger

Does Hope really spring eternal? by Hierophant Andelo Kopač

It's such a shame that hope is a finite resource.

At least, that's what it feels like at the moment - particularly when it comes to the subject of having hope in the Empire. It does not surprise me, in all honesty; without a captain at the helm, it was always probable that the ship would lose its course. What saddens me most, however, is that recent actions show that some parts of the sector feel that finding any old port in a storm will do.

Hope, as a Virtue, is of course not the only one to, at times, feel like it has run out; it is not uncommon, for instance, for athletes to run low on Fortitude, or for pious soldiers to forgo Temperance when gifted a short amount of time away from the front. Yet there is always the sense that these Virtues can recover.

Hope, like Faith, is a delicate matter, and has a penchant for being lost rather than found; recent actions within Acheron Rho can cause damage untold if not addressed.

The initiation of The Cerberus Protocol is one of these actions, and I wish I could be more hopeful about it.

Drawing in the likes of Vagrant could be a way to strengthen and unite humanity under the safety of the Empire, yet it could *also* end up being an amalgamation of strength for the benefit of the few and not for the many.

Maybe, if this was set against a backdrop of peace and prosperity, then it would be different.

As a member of the High Church, I know there will be people behind the scenes working tirelessly to ensure that the needs of the Empire are at the top of any agenda. I can only hope that any such talks are painless and productive.

The story of the Sector Trade Organisation is again, different.

All those years ago, humanity came to this sector with hope in its hearts. One faith, one humanity, one Empire, forging ahead into the stars. Time, as time does, wore down the bonds between us, making it harder and harder for humanity to revisit those wondrous times.

Then came the Scream, and The Silence.

And we survived.

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We crossed the stars themselves to be with our brothers and sisters who had been lost.

Hope. Hope brought us back together.

With the Emperox gone, we all need to have this hope in our hearts once more, but instead, it has waned, replaced by fear, protectionism and greed.

That is what it meant when Vela joined the STO.

If we were in a golden age, feelings would again no doubt be different. As it stands, however, it feels as if Vela is more intent on saving itself and on making money than on repaying the Empire for the centuries of prosperity and protection that it has been afforded.

Perhaps this is why it feels like a betrayal, and not 'just business.'

Now whilst *I personally* struggle to have hope, the High Church does not waiver in the face of adversity. It does not snap under pressure. When there is a storm, the High Church *always* has a hand on the rudder, steadying the ship.

However, it must be noted that the list of ways of *how* to do this is growing smaller and smaller with every passing moment. Should the need for extensive overseas operations ever arise, it will not be through a lack of Hope in the Empire. Nor will there be a lack of allies - old or new - for the Empire to turn to.

Have no doubt, the High Church will do all in its power to stop the Empire taking steps backwards.

Have no doubt; should the worst occur, it will not be the Empire who will be in need of Hope.

You will be weighed. You will be measured. Pray that you are not found wanting.

Andelo



Disclaimer

This piece has been written to convey the in-character opinions of Andelo Kopač on the topic of faction turn three, and does not necessarily mean that the High Church of Messiah-as-Emperox shares this opinion. Such statements are not designed to be detrimental to the world of Acheron Rho, but are intended to create a fun and interesting narrative. If you have any questions about this, please get in touch with the author via DM, or speak to your local High Church Representative.